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The new life of St. Paul

THE NEW LIFE OF ST. PAUL

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BY
CLEMENT WISE

AUTHOR OF
DARKNESS AND DAWN, UNIVERSALISM, Etc.

*ἄρτι γινώσκω ἐκ μέρους, τότε δὲ ἐπιγνώσομαι καθὼς
καὶ ἐπεγνώσθην.*

(Κορ : Α. κεφ : 13-12).

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DEDICATION.

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO THE SACRED MEMORY OF MY
FATHER, IN WHOSE COMMONPLACE BOOKS I
DISCOVERED THAT HE WAS IN PAUL
BEFORE ME.

December, 1910.

PREFACE.

“WHY another Life of St. Paul, when their name is legion?” The reply is, “Because the subject is inexhaustible.” And to the end of Time we shall never plumb either the significance of his Life and still less his Writings.

Moreover, this Essay differs in its treatment from the ordinary method.

It has undertaken by imaginative sketches to supply the *lacunæ* that have been left in the historical sources. Therefore, though these insertions are worthless as facts, the author ventures to believe that they will be found congruous and helpful to a vivid apprehension of that great Personality who has more deeply influenced the minds and hearts of men than any other, but One.

Of course, I have consulted many Biographies of St. Paul, English and Continental, but apart from the standard work of Conybeare and Howson, I have not found them serviceable. They have either affronted me, or beclouded the Vision that the Lucan original and the immortal Epistles begot within me. Hence I put them aside and confined myself to Paul's fellow voyager and my own conceptions.

As to the Doctrine of St. Paul, involving a study of the Epistles and their Authorship (beyond a suggestion which I have offered as to the Treatise for the Hebrews), space would not permit of any excursions whatever. If the present work should meet with any favour at all, I should desire—indeed, am urged—to attempt to touch the overpowering attraction, though even upon a most inadequate scale.

So I may entertain the hope, if God wills, to meet my readers again.†

CLEMENT WISE.

30th November, 1910.

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THE NEW LIFE OF ST. PAUL

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INTRODUCTORY

WITHOUT Father, without Mother, without Descent, there stepped into the field of history the greatest Prophet after our Lord, and was anointed to his office by the blood of the first Martyr.

It was given him to become the great High Priest of the Gentile Church, chiefly, changing the customs, laws, and faith of many Kingdoms, establishing them in a new order, and conferring upon Christendom an endless Life.

God Almighty will share His creative power when He makes a new World. His beloved Son will be given companionship in founding His Empire. The Holy Spirit is homeless and cannot work apart from Man—the object of Eternal Trinital Love.

The bringing into being the ordained and prepared human instruments for the only glorious chapters in human history demanded the providential selection of every Ancestor. Every alliance will shape the new child and leave its enduring marks and modifications in each succeeding generation; but the chiefly modifying influence, cancelling often special strains, is the dominating power of God's Spirit.

Canny, deceitful and covetous were both the great Ancestors of Paul, but as the great Apostle lay in the loins of Jacob and in the womb of Rachel, he was the inheritor of special blessings, on account of his parents' mutual faith, their trials, and God's covenant with Abraham.

Jacob wrested with the Angel and prevailed, wherefore his name was changed to that of Israel : for as a Prince had he power with God and with men, and did prevail. While Rachel prevailed not in her hard labour with Benoni and called him her sorrow when she was departing, her husband changed that into Benjamin—the Son of my right hand.

He was not unmindful of his dream. “ Behold the Lord stood above the ladder, and said, “ I am the Lord God of Abraham thy Father, and the God of Isaac, the land whereon thou liest, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the West and to the East and to the North and to the South. And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest and will bring thee again into this land : for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of ” (Genesis xxviii. 13—15).

And again at Penuel, God blessed him, causing Jacob to say, “ I have seen God face to face and my life is preserved ” (Genesis xxxii. 30). Blessings continued to be pronounced at Bethel. “ I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply ; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee and Kings shall come of thy loins : And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land ” (Genesis xxxv. 11—12).

Every child born into the World is predestined—first by its heredity, secondly by the appointed

destiny pronounced in infinite wisdom and love for its required services and its future. There was no escape for Benjamin; no escape from becoming the Ancestor of Saul of Tarsus. No escape, when the Almighty dipped His cup into the stream of Jewish life in Tarsus and lifted out the Apostle Paul and poured it out around the little seed which He was purposing to plant at Antioch, to become the great tree of Christendom, destined to overshadow and tumble its fruits to all the waste places of the World. But it took seventeen and a half centuries to make the Author of the Epistle to the Romans. Not a day, not an hour was unnecessary, nor superfluous. Rachel had to surrender her own life for her new son, but the aimless wailings of the infant, who knew not it was orphaned, and whose small end at the candle of life it was so difficult to light, was carefully shielded by Angelic ministry—from being blown out—for within the loins of the infant Benjamin, lay the Apostle Paul.

Benjamin—"little Benjamin" was the special comforter of the aged Patriarch, when the son of his love, Joseph, "was not." The guilty brethren were forced to bestow upon Benjamin feelings of an opposite character to those they indulged towards Joseph. Time, too, had devoured their jealousy and remorse stole over their hearts to darken solitary hours and to awaken spectres at the thought of their odious crime.

Benjamin was carefully looked after. "Take care of Benjamin for Father's sake"—doubly bereaved by Rachel and by Joseph. "Take up tenderly and lift with care the baby boy when he wanted a camel ride; for all the household knew that Jacob's life

was bound up in the lad's life, and Judah was ready to become surety for him when Benjamin's sack was opened and the fatal cup turned up. Superfluous precautions ! for the Tree of Christendom lay in the boy.

Seventeen centuries and a half—that was the gestation of the Apostle—Heredity and decreed Predestination governing the whole long period. Strange strains of ancestry revealing themselves. Jacob's blessing upon Benjamin seems like a post-script ; his former chief comforter seems to have deeply disappointed him—the lad, having been spoiled, it was not unlikely. The blessing was, “ Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf : in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.”

Seventeen centuries and a half and that blessing was preserved. Not only did the tribe of Benjamin become noted for its valour, but in two pitched battles it slew 40,000 of their brethren, and only by stratagem was it overcome. And it had accomplished that slaughter in no holy cause, but defending that polluted city, Gibeah, where sons of Belial were found within the borders of Benjamin, in the days when there was no King in Israel and every man did what was right in his own eyes.

Seventeen centuries and a half and Benjamin ravins at Damascus as a wolf, or wanted to. But his letters of authority to hale men and women to prison and to death are scattered on the road. That night he has no spoil to divide ; next morning he has no Christian prey to devour. The opposite blessing of Moses was beginning to work. “ And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall

dwell in safety by him and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders " (Deuteronomy xxxiii. 12). Benjamin's blessing by Moses was being transferred from Saul to the threatened Church.

From the tribe of Benjamin the first King of Israel was selected. Among the mighty men of valour for which the tribe was distinguished, one was pre-eminent in stature, strength, and comeliness. Samuel kissed him, for he was both modest and martial, and had hid himself among the stuff. But King Saul had no charmed career and tainted strains from Gibeah gave tokens of a piebald character. In the visions given to Saul, the persecutor of Christian disciples, even these strains would not be entirely burnt up. They were confessed by the man Paul when writing to the Romans, Leader as he was over the New Israel he was creating, he cried out, under the Benjamite heredity, "That which I do, I allow not : for what I would, that do I not : but what I hate, that do I. . . . For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. Oh ! wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans vii. 15, 22—25).

Of the immediate ancestors of St. Paul we have no records. The most honourable and the most beneficent labours ever go without adequate recognition in this world.

Who thinks of the Father or the mother of distinguished names in history ? The brightest luminary

excludes from notice those associated with its rising. Who asks for a piece of the root when he is enjoying the fruit? Who thanks the worms for the richness of the crop? Who made and sustains the forest? Who when struck dumb by the pride and power of a wondrous civilisation enquires after the "hands," Who put it up and keeps it going?

The younger children in a large family scarcely ever see their father, and the elder ones are perfectly indifferent as to what he is doing. His early leaving and late arrival relieves them of his presence, and from the wife of his bosom all cares, troubles and impending dangers are kept back. People are glad to look at the face of the clock, careless of the works behind, but if they go wrong, or stop, there is notice enough.

So of those benefactors to the Human Race—St. Paul's father and mother—we are left without any knowledge.

The World might be orphaned for any obvious manifestation of fatherly compassion or care. For that, the World had to wait until Christ came in Person to reveal and demonstrate it. And the first Person in the Trinity: for want of Incarnation, does not, and cannot, receive the warm and absorbed devotion which the Son claims and gets.

It is in Heaven itself that the Father comes to His own, where the Father shall be seen and worshipped as the Son is; and when the Kingdom of human hearts is handed over to Him Who gave the Son and God be all in all.

As for Paul, his calling to the Apostleship ended for him, private and tribal relationship. With his eyes open he saw clearly that any or all ambitions

he ever entertained for himself, his family, or his people, were done with for ever. He died unto fleshly ties, in the hour when he became alive in the Spirit. Dear reminiscences of the old life in Tarsus. Parental solicitude for his career. Pride in his successes at the feet of Gamaliel. Budding purposes to shake his nation free from the Roman yoke. Resolutions to raise it religiously by informing the traditions of the Elders with the purer lore of the Prophets. Advancement under the Imperial Procurators. All these plans, hopes, memories, shrank like a posy of beautiful flowers, gathered from the garden of youthful fancy, as they were held before the awfully bright and consuming fire of his ever present Vision. They perished in his hand : he could no longer press them to his heart : they were colourless, scentless, dead : And with both hands he threw them behind him for ever.

So it was that no reference to his parents or guardians is to be culled from his Epistles or from the record of his travels. He never sought to renew the early associations of childhood—to lay a wreath upon the tomb of father or mother, or made enquiries after the household slaves who ministered to his helplessness. The election of Jehovah is awful. Stamps out the ordinary traits of our common Nature, and stamps *in* a new Image, with a new Superscription, “ This man is God’s, Render unto God that which is God’s.”

So it was, as we said at the outset, that St. Paul stepped into the field of history, like Melchizideck, without father and mother, and without descent. But that both parents transmitted traits of character even as they derived theirs from immemorial times,

is, of course, undoubted. And that the Almighty watched and waited by the banks of the river of Humanity until in its flow through Tarsus the Guardian of the Race dipped in His cup and poured out Paul, wherewith to plant His new Tree of Christendom.

To the common eye and understanding, there was little to differentiate that young Jew from crowds of others ; but in the eye of the Discerner of Hearts, and who in a past Eternity--had decreed just that special type of mind and heart which would best lay the foundations of the Redeemer's Kingdom, there was no possibility of mistake.

We are left then to conjecture what sort of a home the Boy Saul enjoyed, and what the special influences which moulded his character. It seems likely that he enjoyed the inestimable benefits of a home which was not cursed by perpetual sordid cares. The privilege of Roman citizenship, probably an heirloom, was either due to purchase, or was a grateful acknowledgment of services rendered to the Government. The Boy Saul was free-born. At the birth, the bedchamber was surely not without heavenly attendants, for the old Roman adage that nothing which belongs to humanity is foreign to me, must be supposed to be regnant in a superior degree, in the breasts of those Immortals who were commissioned, if not created, to minister to the heirs of Salvation.

What special rites were performed after Jewish customs we cannot say : those done at Bethlehem at the Nativity were not elaborate : whatever they were they could not communicate any additional reward in happiness to the mother ; who, filled with

joy after her pains and labour, saw by her pillow the puling Infant, who was to shake down the pillars of Heathenism and renew the face of antique society. Did that shadowy figure, Paul's father, then come to salute mother and child, and breathe his thankfulness? "The child is choking." "Quick, nurse!" The attendant flies. Then, after a moment, confesses she thought the child was gone—he was blue. No need for alarm. That infant was to spend a night and a day in the deep, and if Paul was on board, even chained, he could save the lives of living cargo and crew under shipwreck.

CHAPTER I.

LIFE AT TARSUS.

NO ONE knows how Tarsus began. It was nearly four and a half centuries before Paul breathed its air that Xenophon found it a great and prosperous city. "Great" by standard of ancient Greece: for all material things there were small: it was only in the intellectual that Greece was great. Babylonian adventurers doubtless traded with the Anatolian tribes, Assyria afterwards, and then Medes and Persians. Persia perceived the natural advantages of the spot, and made it a port. Successive waves of conquest left only permanent things—Injustice, and "man's inhumanity to man." The name of the city was traditionally given to it on account of Pegassus losing a hoof there. Apparently the sacred Steed had spurned the people too vigorously, as altogether too barbarous. Of course, the bulk of the people were slaves, because the plains so rich: and those who owned them, or trafficked in their produce, were able to erect temples and afterwards schools of learning with crowds of students. So the privileged minority became gallant and cultured. The essential element in Phrygian worship was that of Cybele—the Divine Mother. And as the City had among its Professors one of the Tutors of Augustus, and the University was permeated by the philosophy of Athenodorus, Pegassus need not to have lost his hoof so prematurely.

But Tarsus, to-day, after accomplishing its cycle,

giving to Christian annals an imperishable name, has now reverted to its barbarism, and is trodden under by the cursed hoof of the Saracen. And how much does Tarsus care to-day for her neighbour city Adana, bereft of her children? Will the Chancellories of the Christian Powers move to comfort her?

Two thousand years ago a cry of a new-born boy was heard at Tarsus, and as a consequence 300 years after, the greatest Empire of Antiquity parted with its gods.

It was a child of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, loyal to Judah, the law-giver, at the Disruption, as became a tribe which furnished the first King to the Twelve. A Hebrew of the Hebrews—pure Jews both father and mother—to whom pertained the adoption, the glory, the covenant, the law, the service of God and the promises: whose were the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.

Eight days after, the child was circumcised, and received the two names—Saul (Hebrew) and Paulus (Latin), the family being proud of the Roman Citizenship. A first-born son required to be redeemed from Jehovah. Five shekels of Syrian weight—some five or six shillings—Paul was cheap at the price. The Presentation and Redemption were ever made easy: any priest would do—anywhere. Priests are never slow to take money. And though the Presentation could not take place before thirty-one days, the rite might be postponed until mother and child could appear together, at the next Festival at Jerusalem.

A pretty and godly custom obtained in Jewish households of teaching children a passage of Scrip-

ture, commencing with the letter of the beginning or ending of their names. This was to be a motto for Life's guidance and support. Saul would doubtless be taught his text as soon as he could speak. The good old Rabbi would come in to pay a call.

"And how is the fine boy?" The mother would say, "Oh, he is getting to speak so nicely. I will just have him brought in to say his text." The slave girl brings him in, abashed, and as the Rabbi bends down to greet him, the long beard tickles his forehead: but he is taken up kindly and gets courage to stroke the fine white hair. "Say your text to the Rabbi, like a good boy." Whereupon little Saul repeats with reverence and modesty, "Samuel, Samuel! Then Samuel answered, Speak! for thy servant heareth." "The Lord bless thee, my son," says the Rabbi. "And who called Samuel?" "Say!" Saul hung his head and softly replied, "The Lord." "You will always hear the Lord's voice, won't you?" The little being, now standing on the floor, looks up with open eyes, but mantled cheek, and answers, "Yes!"

The mother smiles and bends to kiss the little forehead, and attends the Rabbi to the door, whispering many things in the old man's ear e'er he leaves.

Anon the little child is stood upon an Assyrian chair to look through the window. "Look! look!" says the slave girl, "at the pretties."

Tarsus was twelve miles from the sea and some five miles from the mountains.

North was the long, complicated and knotted range of the Taurus—a mighty rampart, guarding the Uplands and putting its best face by far to the ocean. From the rich alluvial plains, dotted with orchards

and olives, the lower slopes were richly clothed with oaks, beeches, plane trees, and most European trees, with the addition of the palm, arbutus, and cactus.

The soft folds of the woods are richly gilt by the declining sun, while great creases of deep purple furrowed their breasts, and were broadening and deepening, threatening to engulf all in tremendous gloom. Whether at noon or at evening, these dry climates give no graduated tones and all shadow is little infused with colour. It is glory or damnation, nothing between. Hence the height of the school of English landscape—born of our moist islands.

“Look! Look! little Paul, at the pretties.” Above the range of ruddy pines, an immense army of white winged Angels seemed to have rested and watched with pity the city. Or is the mountain range a serried rank of white-robed priests, confessing the sins of the city and offering blood on the altar stairs of Heaven?

For the abhorrent black rocks, lava and scorïæ—remnants of volcanoes, had in pity been clothed with a lovely raiment of snow. Blue shadow carved out tempting ravines and supported towering golden pinnacles. The gold changes to old gold, and by-and-by in one instant the whole range blushes into rose.

“Look! Look! little Paul at the pretties.” Look at the river! See the dark blue waves dashing down the limestone ledges; but all its white foam is now purple in the valley.

“I will tell you a story, little Paul.”

“Oh, do tell me,” said the boy, and smiled.

“There was a great Queen came up this river. She was the Queen of Egypt, and she came, dressed

so lovely, sitting in a golden barge."

"What's a barge?" says Paul.

"A boat, you know, and the slaves had silver oars and the barge had purple sails. Oh! it was splendid! She came to see a great Commander, a great soldier, you know (don't interrupt) under the Romans."

"I'm a Roman citizen, says father," said Paul, parenthetically, "Go on!"

"Well, the great Queen saw the Commander, and the great General saw the Queen, and the Queen made him her slave."

"Made him her slave?" said Paul, in great astonishment.

"Oh! said Cibby, I cannot explain. What is that in the street? There is a crowd and a man is being beaten."

"They are beating him so hard," said Paul, "what has he done?"

The slave girl pressed nearer the crenelle and started back with a cry, "It is my father!" Snatching up the child she hurried out sobbing, but before they left the apartment, little Paul had kissed his slave nurse and said, "I love you, Cibby!"

As the maid rushed out with her burden, the child nearly knocked off the *Mesusah* which was attached to every door of a clean (Leviticallly) apartment. This phylactery of texts, sheathed in its shining metal case, was invested with the character of a charm, and its use was regarded somewhat as the Russians regard their Ikons, which are saluted and a candle kept burning before them, because their reverential treatment gives protection to the house and its inmates. But this was and is infinitely superior

to any gilt effigy of an "orthodox" saint. It contained great words, written on parchment in twenty-two lines.

"Hear, O Israel ! The Lord our God is One Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might. And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house and on thy gates" (Deut. vi. 4—9).

Then going on to the 11th chapter, 13th verse :

"And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my Commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God and to serve him with all your hearts and with all your soul. That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil." Concluding with the 21st verse : "That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swore unto your Fathers to give them, as the days of Heaven upon the earth."

This solemn adjuration was doubtless taught to the children of every household, and deserved to be revered. But every good custom gets corrupted in the letter rather than the Spirit. Doubtless Paul's parents reverently touched the Mesusah case and

pronounced a benediction when entering, and little Paul darted a finger at it when his nurse carried him out and rocked it.

Out with his nurse for an airing, a heathen child offered a plum, but he was instructed by his parents to have nothing to do with heathen children, they were accounted accursed; so, though the infant Apostle was pleased and wanted to take it, he remembered his father's and mother's injunction and withdrew his hand. The heathen one pressed the plum against Paul's teeth, but he turned his head, looking askance with one eye, quite in doubt whether he was right or wrong. His heart said, show friendliness to the good hearted heathen boy. His mind reminded him, "Obey your father and your mother." This case was typical, many instances occurred when children "made up to him" in the streets, and any communication with heathen children was strictly forbidden.

Paul began to argue very early and often put posers to his parents.

"Father, my Bible fell into the gutter when I was going to the Synagogue School, and a procession was coming out from an Idol Temple—a drunken crowd—singing so nastily, and dancing, and then falling, as if they were crazed. But one of the boys—a heathen—who was looking on, darted in among the crowd, and kept my precious book from being trodden in the mire, and with a beautiful smile, he brought it to me and said, "I know you value it, for I have seen you reading it when going to and from School." Tell me, father, are they all really accursed by God?

"But before replying," said his father, "let me

ask you, 'How was it that the Pedagogue did not take you to School as usual?' "

"Oh! Cibby's brother, you know, is a slave in the fields and he was beaten so badly that he died and my pedagogue went to the funeral."

The father did not like the intelligence, but said to his little son, "Don't you see that they are accursed because they are not the descendants of Abraham, and God was pleased to favour him and his race, because of his faith and obedience."

"But," said Paul, "is not God a good father?"

"When mother gave my sister, Rebecca, the choicest fruit from the dish and left me scarcely any, you said, 'Fathers should not make favourites among children of one family.' Are there two Gods?—one God for us and the other one, the father of the slaves and the Heathen? only this second God is not able to save his children, but *our* God was able to send Moses and lead our fathers out from the bondage of Egypt. And why does he not send another Moses to lead out the slaves here from the Roman Empire?"

"My slaves, indeed"! said Paul's father—*sotto voce* "My child, you are far too young to question your elders. Attend to your lessons. As to your absurd question, 'Are there two Gods'? Do you not know the first lines of the Mesusah, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might.'"

"Yes," interposed Paul. "That is what I want to do. I could love the strong God, but not the weak one. If there is only one God, then He is not fair."

"Now go to bed," was Paul's father's clenching argument.

On his way to the roof—that most delightful chamber after the sweltering heat of the day—little Paul stood transfixed, listening to that complex of sounds—the breathing of a city—inarticulate. But often as he had heard it, and he loved to hear it, it ever stirred within him strange yearnings and great foreshadowings of approaching events, in which he was to take part.

His sister drew near to salute him for the night. “We are descendant of Abraham,” he said to his sister, “and we are the favourites of Heaven.”

“Yes,” said his sister. “Thank God we are. We can never be common—that’s a blessing—and when Messiah comes shan’t we be great and glorious, and tread the nations under our feet.”

“Sister, you forget a portion of God’s covenant with Abraham. ‘He shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him. For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.’ It depends upon us to do justice and judgment. I don’t want the Messiah to tread down the nations under our feet. Was not my nurse good to me? Is not my pedagogue doing me good service daily? Have not Heathen boys frequently done me a good turn? There are several Proselytes attend the Synagogue, I shall live to make Proselytes.”

“Oh, you are a strange boy—not a proper boy at all. I want the Messiah to tread our enemies into the mire—a whisper in your ear—‘I may become the mother of the Messiah.’”

“Then,” said Paul. “I hope he will become a second Moses. You know my old nurse how she lost her father?” and stopped. Brother and sister gazed at each other. Then the girl took him by the shoulders and gave him a good shake. “What are you whispering? Always in dreamland. Oh, yes! always the same words, ‘justice and judgment,’ you must know them by this time, you need not be ever repeating them.”

Then with parted lips, giving a line of whitest ivory and instantly clashing them again for a buss, Paul’s sister skipped away, trolling a snatch about the horse and his rider, and blood up to the bridle.

CHAPTER II

PAUL'S YOUTH AT TARSUS CONTINUED.

YOUNG PAUL, after parting with his sister, e'er he knelt to pray, gazed northwards, where he constantly longed to penetrate the secret of the Cilician Gates, whence issued all the caravans, the herds of sheep and cattle and the merchants from the further East.

The Pass was ramparted by two great mountains. Ever as he went to school and back, his wistful gaze was directed to them, yearning to pass between their rocky shoulders, and to commence those exquisite explorations into the unknown, which it is the prerogative of youth and innocence only once to taste in its most penetrating flavour. He loved those shining heights: but that night, the hour, and the heavy atmosphere had stripped those black peaks of their surplices and nothing could be seen. And nothing in the foreground, except dull red lights dotted sparsely over the City, which became smoked and lost entirely as the houses retreated and concealed themselves among the vapours of the intervening plain.

Suddenly an Apocalypse ! Oh, such a flash ! All the white Angels had come in streams, rent the veil of darkness, disclosed the gaunt wall of the Taurus, and smaller lightnings played with rapiers above the Cilician Gates. All over ! save a solemn prelude to a mighty crash of thunder, as the Titans rolled their chariots over the roughest of roads over the clouds.

The boy was praying for the world beyond the Cilician Gates, and for the arrival of the fulfilments of God's promise to bless all nations, through Abraham and his seed.

And, as he prayed, the steady monotone of the Cydnus grew into an angrier key. Gurgling and choking swirls of water had tumbled over rocks, dry for weeks before, and were now far submerged. The new roaring of the river was followed by swishing rain, as if the Heavens had fallen. Retreating rapidly into his covert, closing doors and drawing curtains, the youth unsatisfied and looking for relief in forgetfulness, presently the waters of Lethe came over him. And as he slept, a dream crept in. He was choking, he was battling with waves. He was sinking, when arms were reaching towards him, but he could not grasp them, his own were glued to his side. With a mighty effort, he found himself sitting bolt upright, with his Damascus quilt thrust to the end of his mattress—panting for breath.

Next morning the Pedagogue did not appear and Paul was taken to school by his father. The son was silent, thinking of his dream, and was about to ask his parent if dreams came true, when his father opened with the oft-repeated injunction not to have anything to do with the heathen children.

"I cannot take you back to-day," he said, "but you can be trusted *to go straight home*, not speaking to anyone, old or young, except any whom you know among the congregation of the Synagogue."

Passing a smaller building where a crowd of small children, seated upon the ground, were screaming at their hardest, repeating together portions of the Law, Paul entered the adjoining Academy where

elder boys sat at the feet of Rabbis.

It was not long before teacher and pupil were engaged in a controversy. "If you want to know," said the Rabbi, "you must go to Jerusalem."

"Good!" said Paul, "my father said I should go, and I mean to."

School was over, and the river, being in flood, a number of the youths ran together to see the sight. The banks were not far distant, and though to *go straight home* would be impossible, and also to have a peep at the Cydnus, Paul satisfied his conscience by reminding himself that he should only speak to the Synagogue boys. Though I have written he "satisfied his conscience," that was not positively so, a dull, uneasy, struggling consciousness was in conflict with the careless decision of his will, and a blind was drawn down over his bright spirits. He would certainly not speak to any but the Synagogue boys. It really was an inspiring sight. The now turbid water, which would never have reflected a bracelet of Cleopatra was under a cloudless sky, and white flakes of foam were made and melted, as the hurrying snows pressed together in some aimless endeavour to go somewhere. "A Lamb!" cried Paul, "see the Lamb!" Its head was bobbing on the surface of sweeping curves, and in its choking career gave an intermittent bleat now and then. "Come, boys, come on," said Paul, "we must save it," and springing on to a rock and in posture to receive the animal as it appeared destined to come within his reach.—Lo! and behold! a divergent sweep of the flood seemed to burst from another rock behind, threatening to bear the lamb away. Paul reached and reached, and was throwing his strapped rolls

of parchments to loop in the creature's head, when, being over-weighted, he found himself in a moment amid the swirling waters.

The Jewish system of school teaching included swimming, and Paul was not unacquainted with natation, but the strongest expert could not contend with such a volume of water racing like frightened steeds. Paul was thrown violently against a rock, disabling one arm, and the other could scarcely keep his head free. Breathless and gasping, he saw a figure running on the bank, and when he was borne over a weir, his last view was that of a youth, whom he seemed to recognise, plunging below the fall to rescue him. He knew no more until he felt arms beneath him, bearing him up the river bank and laying him down for some vigorous shampooing. A spasm of sickness, and water relieved him, and Paul was on his feet again. He looked on his rescuer. It was the lad who had rescued his Hebrew Bible from the feet of the Corybantes. "You have twice blessed me," said the Hebrew boy, "may the God of Israel reward you."

How to get home and appear before an incensed father? He was technically in fault, and if he had gone "straight home," no disaster would have befallen him. Paul was therefore ill at ease and knew not precisely what degree of displeasure he had incurred from the Heavenly Power. Was he wrong in attempting to recover the drowning lamb? To be sure, it was born to be sacrificed, and a few days more or less of his animal existence was of little consequence. But to get into the habit of excusing oneself from risks and pains by a narrow scrutiny of the worthiness of an endangered life would be to cultivate and make permanent elements

of character in the last degree despicable.

He was rapidly coming to the conclusion that he had done nothing but right and that the fault lay with his father, in forbidding him to have nothing to do with the heathen. Had he been allowed to call and thank Amyntas for rescuing his Bible, he would not have gone with the other boys to see the flood. As it was, it was Amyntas who had found him out, and under God's providence was the means of saving his life.

Thought Paul to himself, Is my own life, after all, any more valuable than that of the sacrificed lamb ? I don't know that I have ever done, or hope to do anything of real worth to the world. In this whirlpool of reflections, the two boys, drenched and deserving, were to appear before Paul's angry father.

The father was not in at the time, and the mother, casting a displeased glance at Amyntas, was above measure startled at the two dripping figures. Paul's mother was for pushing the deliverer away and closing the door. But Paul held it open and said, " You must at least gratefully acknowledge that it was through this young man that your son has been restored to you."

" No thanks are due to me," interposed Amyntas. " I know that the Jews are despised, but although I know nothing of the gods, I know a good and high-bred boy who may be much better than Apollo, and I could not let him drown."

With very mingled feelings, and somewhat mollified, the mother said, " Paul must tell me about it. Meantime, would it not be better for you," addressing Amyntas, " to go home at once and change your attire ? " " If you have done my dear son such a

service, Heaven bless you ! May the God of Abraham and our Fathers' be your portion eventually."

The two youths, parting cordially, and with mutual esteem, both went their several ways—Amyntas to make ready for a lecture from Athenodorus, Paul to get a lecture from his sire and the tearful remonstrances of his mother.

When he appeared again from his chamber, not without thanking his God for his merciful deliverance, his father had returned with heavy displeasure upon his face.

"Well, sir," he began ('Don't say "Sir" to him,' said the mother). Not heeding, he repeated, "Well, sir ! I see that you are bent upon bringing disgrace upon our name and nation. Can't you leave that Pagan dog alone ? You lied to me this morning and promised me to go straight home from School, and now you are found half-drowned with a heathen dog."

"He is not a dog," said Paul, but all his moral balance and his prayer-preparedness were overthrown. "He has shown himself a true friend."

"A true friend of a son of mine" ! exclaimed the father, and starting from his couch with agony and horror depicted in every feature, he raised his staff, seized his son by the neck, and was about to bring it down with passionate severity. But the boy had disengaged himself—had sprung up with indignation flashing from his eyes, while his mother had rushed in to arrest the descending stroke. Then Paul, stung to the quick, by the unjust suspicions entertained respecting himself and his casual friend, for the moment and for ever, cast away the reverence which he had up to then habitually cherished for his parent. It was gone, like an eye gouged out. He closed with his

father, wrung from his aged arm his staff and flung it upon the floor. That humiliation was too great, and while his mother shrieked, the old man fell prostrate in a swoon.

Dead silence reigned for a moment. It was the noiseless opening of a chamber of horrors. Every remnant of filial affection was being burnt up in a white heat of passion. And coldly, with a white face, he said, amid the stifled sobs of his mother (alluding to Amyntas), "He saved my Bible and he saved me, and I did not lie to my father." And proudly and apparently with unconcern, he was making for the door, when his sister, with blanched face, met him. He looked and she looked and neither could say anything ; but as she advanced and passed him, he heard her gush of tears, while the elements of a happy home were being burnt to tinder.

Oh the tragedies of homes ! It is there that hells are to be found. What secrets are unavailingly buried there ? What spectres arise from their graves to mingle with the mirthful, and show themselves at incongruous seasons and will not be laid ?

The outside is so fair and seemly. The curtains are fresh from the laundry, and the maid is burnishing the brasses on the door step, but the fresh air does not brush away last night's wild and cruel words, those mortal stabs into living hearts which are to bleed for ever.

One chapter of Paul's life was ended. It was no use turning back, and the brand of it could never be erased.

The white heat was cooling down ; the seared nerves of feeling were beginning to be alive again. Dim perceptions of a resurrection of the former relationships were dawning, and with them the advent of Remorse—

a lodger who could not be dismissed—bringing with him Memory. Maleficent Twins! Oh! If they could be smothered, and a happier reign ensue.

When the outlawed child had retired to his room, his garment stuck to a large wound in his arm, and also some movements rendered it impossible for him to strip off his clothing. This distraction was a great relief. To have attention forcibly directed from his wounded heart and blistered brain to a wound of the flesh was a merciful intervention. He had to descend to the Courtyard, wake up the porter, get assistance to help him undress—all was ministering to a partial restoration to normal conditions. It was found necessary to send for a leech; for his bad arm was partially dislocated; and remaining in bed was imposed by the Anatolian surgeon. The tempest was over, but the remains of the havoc it had wrought gave desolation to Paul's heart. He was only 14 years old, but almost a man in thought and reflection. He knew that the happiness of his home had been destroyed; that he had lost his father, alienated his mother and made his sister to desire her earlier nuptials at Jerusalem. And another trouble was looming. It had been talked of that Paul might be placed in his sister's new home, where he was to acquire all Rabinnical lore. How could he be received with the love and honour he formerly enjoyed.

And with regard to the critical act which had revolutionised his relationship to the household. Was it not due to an act of disobedience? Vainly and proudly he pronounced himself guiltless of lying to his father, for in literal fact he had not essayed to go *straight* home, and all the after consequences were due to his want of scrupulous obedience.

It is the "little more" and the "little less" that makes them "worlds away." Bootless it was to set up defences and estimate the small difference there was between a detour by the Cydnus and the nearest way home. The first step in the wrong direction was enough to condemn him. Ten, fifty, or a thousand paces would not bring him in more guilty.

In the pain of these reflections, that of his wounded arm was lost, and when his sister appeared to bring him the morning repast, she came in with sad red eyes, deposited the tray, and turned to leave in silence—another stab. But his broken voice arrested her. She stood without turning, and speaking to her back, Paul said, "Tell fa-ather (the word choked him) that I am learning my trade and I shall repay him as soon as I can for the cost of the Physician." Her shoulders only quivered. She went as she came in—in dumb show.

The next day was the Sabbath, or rather it commenced with sundown, the evening preceding. How he loved the Sabbath! In his father's hand and with his veiled mother holding that of his beloved sister, they all four had to steer with difficulty through the crowded and narrow streets, where asses, cattle and camels strove with pedestrians to find passage. To add to the turmoil, the Temples would empty their congregations to the Bazaars, where vendors shouted their wares, and buyers and sellers struggled together in wordy warfare for an acceptable price. On the top of the accumulated distractions would come a herd of goats, or a string of laden camels, holding their heads scornfully and sniffing eagerly for a whiff from the deserts. To turn from all this, by passing through the outer Gate, and then enter the Women's Court, where

mother and sister were left behind, was peace and blessing indeed. His father, still taking him by the hand, would advance towards the Bema, and leave his boy to stand or sit on the ground, while he seated himself, facing the congregation: for Paul's father was an Elder and read not infrequently the law and the Prophets.

In the dim recesses of the farthest portion of the Synagogue was the Holy of the Holies, where was the Ark of the Covenant and the Tables of the Law. The Lamp, never suffered to go out, was the sole illumination.

The silence and the darkness invested the place with awe, and, being retired from the streets, the echoes of the muffled traffic only added, by suggestion, to the grateful relief from the noise and disturbance outside.

There the Chassan moved with slow and reverent step among the worshippers, directing the order of the service. And when the Covenant made with Abraham was recited, Paul's ear would be at once arrested.

"And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham the second time out of Heaven, and said, 'By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, because thou hast done this thing and hast not withheld thy son—thine only son—that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of Heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies: and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed My Voice.'" And again, "I will be with thee and will bless thee; for unto thee and unto thy seed I will give all the lands, and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because that Abraham obeyed My Voice and kept My charge, and

My commandments and My statutes and My laws.” (Genesis xxii., 15-18 and xxvi., 3-5).

Some stranger would be invited to address the congregation, in the manner in which our Lord Himself so notably commented upon Isaiah—the proceedings having a considerable resemblance to an ordinary meeting of the Plymouth Brethren—only that there was, of course, no analogue to the Lord’s Supper.

The liberty given to strangers is not a little singular, and bears implicit testimony to the manner in which Israel studied the Law and the Prophets, making them the Man of their Counsel, and fitting any true Israelite to take part with propriety, in the accustomed Synagogue worship. That during so many centuries this liberty was not abridged, bears, I repeat, a noble testimony to the character of the devout use of this form of public worship.

It may be safely said that had there been no synagogue, or synagogue “liberty of Prophesying” the Gospel would never have had such free course and been glorified. Thus in the home and haunts of its opponents it found its best aid and furtherance.

There was no service of praise in the Synagogue, which seems to us a sad deficiency. But that hymns were used at the celebration of the great Festivals, we are not left in doubt. And in the Temple worship at Jerusalem, it was a prominent feature, on a scale, having no counterpart even in our Cathedrals.

The comparatively limited employment of music in Roman Catholic worship may have arisen from the close copying, in some respects, of the ritual of the Jews. It is in any view remarkable and regrettable. Protestant developments in worship have done more

to enrich and inspire devotion than any introductions of ritual novelties in which music is absent.

An abuse, however, has lately obtained in Nonconformist worship in Wales. Music threatens to monopolise the greater portion of the available time--prayer, preaching and the scriptures being thrust into the background. Soloists are advertised, and exercises of the heart are downgraded to exercises in oratorio proficiency. This is a part of the general downgrade in religion, pure, dominant and undefiled. If the Synagogue worship was bare and must have been trying to the youngsters of the ordinary type, yet it undoubtedly held Paul, young as he was. And there was no unseemly and abhorrent introduction of humorous, sly, and sarcastic references to professed believers.

The modern preacher in the chapels, who can cut jokes of a saline flavour, causing a breeze of titters to rustle over the crowded pews is counted a valuable asset in the conduct of the eternal campaign to rob and undo the National Establishment.

There used to be in Puritan England, conceptions of Order, Reverence, and a recognition of the solemn issues of Life and Death. "Life was real, life was earnest, and the grave was not its goal"

That attitude of mind is now accounted intolerably old fogey. It is put on the shelf, and Temples are now dedicated to *The Grin*.

But we are leaving dear Paul, lying upon his couch, a prey to the most melancholy reflections. Cut off from the rest of the house, cut off from the sympathy of the other members of the family, cut off, in person, that day, from the congregation of the faithful.

He loved to hear the majestic opening sentence of

the *Shema*. For the Jews, the most practical people on the face of the earth, had the common sense to make of the *Shema* a practicable Creed. And no church which cannot, or will not, embody in understandable terms the essential articles of its belief, can ever stand, or work the work given it to do. Paul knew it, for it was also contained in the Mesusah—hung or attached to every dwelling-room.

“Hear, O Israel. The Lord our God is our Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thine house and when thou walkedst by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. . . . Remember and do all my commandments, and be holy unto your God. I am the Lord your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. I am the Lord your God.”

He recited them in memory and with poignant sorrow he felt he had afflicted his father by disobedience and (horrible) by personal assault. In his remorse he greatly exaggerated the measure of his delinquency; would cast no reflection upon his father's action, and take all the blame to himself. He knew also that he had offended his God: so turning uneasily upon his bed, with his back to the light, he poured a flood of tears upon his pillow. After a while, being relieved by his gush of emotion, he rose and advanced to the window, threw open the lattice, and looked over the populous city where the Emperor Augustus had been a student at the University. His eyes traversed and

detected the Temple of Zeus, that of Apollo and that of Hermes, and he thought, in a quadrangle of the University, the statue of Athenodorus.

Amyntas (though that name by association had become painful) had given him in his casual and very intermittent intercourse, a rescript from a portion of the philosopher's teaching. He had accepted the roll from his acquaintance, but had not opened it. Now, he would see what it said. The light was failing, but through his moist eyes he was able slowly to decipher.

"Know that you are free from all passions only when you have reached the point that you ask God for nothing except what you can ask openly. So live with men as if God saw you. So speak to God, as if men were listening."

He held the roll in his hand, re-read it; looked towards the University and said to himself, "He deserved his statue." Amyntas did well to preserve such sayings. How can such heathen teacher and pupil be alike, accursed? My beloved father misjudged, he did it ignorantly in his zeal for Judaism. May God preserve me from hurting people, even in thought, who are denied the same amount of light as we are blessed with.

Day of wretchedness! Only a slave had come to bring the second meal—the usual evening repast was either purposely omitted or forgotten. He cared not for the meal, but he wanted his sister, and he wanted to know how his father was. Was he ill? Was he grief stricken? And what had become of his mother?

What a Sabbath! The dear sweet harmony of the family circle completely broken up. Himself an outcast. The cheerful but sacred intercourse with learned Rabbis, who came in on Sabbath

evenings. to whose occasional disputations gave to his own intellect such a grateful stimulus and zest, so that no greater disappointment could be given to the awakening mind of the boy than the denial of permission to stay up longer than the appointed hour—all this was likely to be ended for good and all. The shadows of evening were descending, but there was now no darkness oppressing his Spirit, no sense of separation from the Great Father above.

His earthly father may have cherished—Heaven knows what—suspicions of things he had no conception. Perhaps he believed he had gone with Amyntas into some idol temple. And yet God knows, the thought never entered his brain and would be repudiated with horror.

He would like to see the Apollo about which the Tarsian sculptors rave, and the replica taken at the Imperial gardens at Antium, but he would never defile himself by entering a temple.

What strange ideas seemed to possess his father ! And foreign words came upon his lips, of which he had no comprehension, stirring up animosity against his dutiful and reverent son. It was now dark. No one had come to see him since midday. The physician had been in the morning and was called away before he had renewed a bandage—leaving instructions, however, that he must keep his chamber for a week at least.

Paul felt that he had entered into the cloud above Sinai and feared not but that God would justify him in due time.

So in spite of an uproarious crowd hurrying past the house, drunken music and maniac shoutings

from votaries of some heathen deity, Paul slept the sleep of Samuel, ready to hearken to God's call and to respond, "Lord, thy servant heareth."

Dark days! He had to count the days until the end of the week, for Sabbath to come round. He would be taken by the hand again and with his revered father repeat the Shema. The breach would be healed and love would flow, and a complete understanding be established. His father's illusions be dispelled, and Amyntas, though his rescuer, be absolutely renounced, unless, indeed, Paul succeeded in making him a proselyte. The difficulty, however, was to give him the necessary enlightenment, when he was pledged to cut his acquaintance altogether. He must ask guidance from his Heavenly Father.

Revolving the question in his mind, he fell asleep, though his sore heart and brain was felt throughout, a monotone of pain, until the happy day when he would recover his reconciled father, with the suddenly opened gulf closed for ever.

In the middle of the night, when his slumber was as profound as his pain of body and mind would admit, celestial music, from a full band of Angels, saluted his charmed ear. The burst of harmonies was exquisite, but it weakened and faded, as if the messengers of comfort and consolation had swept the strings to leave loud echoes as they hastened to other beds of pain. Paul knew that strain. It had come to him when his younger brother died. It made his face brighten up now in thanks and praise. And the Angels were rewarded, for these messengers are a sort of celestial night birds, which can see best in the dark.

And not one Angel alone came that night to kiss his troubled brow. A cluster came and gave a holy impress to charm disquiet and then sped away.

Next morning—first thought, “Only five days more.” He knew that Time was a healer, and a devourer of things wished to be forgotten. He felt that, though he desired much to see his parents, yet it was best that he should be missed for a season. Though warmly attached to his sister, he had no desire to see her turn her back to him and make no reply but closing the door. So he gave no messages to Kassan the slave, though he looked when he brought his meals, in a disturbed manner, and left hurriedly as in fear of being questioned. The physician, too, came in at a very unseemly hour; just looked in, and went away to some more urgent case. The next morning Paul was awoke by a heavy lumbering noise; he listened half asleep and then more clearly concluded that some cumbersome piece of furniture was being carried down the stairway. There seemed to be whispering and shuffling of feet and only half loud exhortations and directions given to the bearers. The stifled noises gradually ceased at the ground floor.

“It was thoughtful and kind of the servants not to awaken my mother too early. Oh! I hope she is not ill. But now only three days more and I shall make my repentance at my father’s knee, and his tears of joy, and mine of grief will cement our hearts together.”

He sprang from his couch, and when Kassan appeared with his meal, he sent loving greetings to his mother and his sister. He was basking in a sudden ray of joyful anticipation. What is the

matter with you, Kassan? Wake up! you have tumbled my wine jar over my fish and baptised my bread. If I were not in a good humour, I would chastise you." Kassan stared strangely at him, and rapidly adjusting the table, turned and fled.

There appeared to be an unusual number of visitors that morning, and much subdued talking. "Amyntas, I know, would not dare to show himself, poor fellow, and yet he saved me. I will turn again to the glorious predictions of the Prophets, who, through Abraham's seed, and the Advent of the Messiah, are to bless all nations. Thank God! I am one of Abraham's seed, and thanks to my family heirloom, *Civis Romanus Sum*." He took down his Hebrew Bible and at haphazard unrolled the scrolls, when his eye fell upon the passage in Jeremiah, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth? Will He retain his anger for ever? Will he keep it unto the end? Behold thou hast spoken thus and yet hast done evil things and hast had thy way" (Jeremiah iii. 4—5, R.V.). He bent his head and tears began to trickle down his face. Then taking up another scroll, in the same casual manner, his eye fell upon the words: "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you even the sure mercies of David. Behold! I have given him for a witness to the people, a Prince and Commander to the people. Behold! thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel, for he hath glorified thee" (Isaiah lv. 3—5).

He paused and said aloud, "I must make Amyntas run unto Him. And not him alone. One nation after another will come under the covenant of Abraham : and then added, under his breath, "Why can't my father see it ?"

Another scroll he took up and read : "And David my servant shall be King over them, and they all shall have one Shepherd. They shall also walk in my judgment, and observe my judgments and do them" (Ezekiel xxxvii. 24).

He smiled with a triumphant glance—but was struck immediately afterwards by the silence of the house—all the visitors appeared to have left together. Throwing open the lattice he was arrested as usual by the panoramic view.

The snows of Taurus were glistening in the sun and the sky above it gave the broadest "ribband of blue," as if God was reminding Himself to keep His promises to Israel and the other nations ; and kept robing Himself in the tokens and pledges of His own creation. Paul felt what Newman expressed two thousand years subsequently :

"Praise to the Holiest in the height,
And in the depth be praise ;
In all His words most wonderful,
Most sure in all His ways."

His eye ranged over the flat roofs, and he said to himself, "I can see the pole of the Synagogue, I declare, and also a number of people entering. What special service I wonder,, is going on ? No abominable idol procession, thank Heaven !" He amused himself afterwards by patching up some of his school books, and then began to be impatient for his midday meal.

When a knock came and he bade Kassan enter. It was not Kassan, but a strange hired servant.

"Where is Kassan?" he enquired.

"He had to go out," was all that Paul could get out of him. His spirits were rising every hour. "These past few black days shall never be reckoned in the happy days of my youth. The blisters of my heart are healing—there is joy before me and I am to go to keep the Passover, at *Jerusalem*, the capital of the Messiah's Kingdom. A delicious stream of anticipations flowed over his soul. He had never been far from the Taurus and the secret of the Cilician Gates had never been penetrated.

Jerusalem comes first and last. After that, the Southern Picnic and the wonders of the Temple. "I shall go North some day and become a Herald to the Nations we are to subdue and bless. So Paul strode about his chamber and speculated what sort of Chief Rabbi would be his teacher. "I have heard my father speak of Gamaliel, but not altogether in his praise. He thought him too "broad"—whatever he meant I scarcely knew."

There was now only one day intervening. That would soon fly in the joyful anticipation of meeting and getting back to the *status quo ante*. Paul broke into snatches of song. But Kassan appeared with a message from his mother, "not to sing." "Why not? I wonder," mused he, disappointed. "Well, I shall hum at all events." And seeking a vent for his spirits; he caught up the scrolls of the Prophets and began to play ball with them. Isaiah was followed by Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and Daniel fell upon a shelf. "They are safe with me," said Paul, "I will never allow their words to fall to the ground."

But no sooner had he said it than Isaiah escaped his fingers and fell flop. A shudder passed through him at the irreverence he had committed. "That will never do," he said, and falling upon his knees, he begged to be forgiven. He then took them up and kissed them severally and put them in his chosen preserve.

"Only one night and my father again! I shall go to bed early and become unconscious."

But Paul was not to be left entirely in his slumbers. In the depth of the night he was sweetly awakened by the same choir of Angels that had comforted him twice before. And although his soul was ravished by the vanishing harmonies, yet something ominous shaded his pleasure. For these visitations had previously found him immersed in sorrow. Was he being prepared for some dread experience? The thought, however, of his dear father and seeing him to-morrow morning came with its delightful solace, as he closed his eyes again. For he had never felt such tenderness towards him, as now, that he had inflicted pain and injury upon him. To be the cause, innocently or guiltily, of bringing upon a beloved person grievous suffering is the sure initiation to preparing quite a new relationship—deeper, intenser; and a devotion that will bear any strain. That is the way, the strong links of Eternal Love are forged and maintained, which bind the Mercy Seat to the Transgressing World.

But the day had come, the Day of Light, which would dispel the memory of the dark period behind. With fervent thanks to his merciful Preserver and taking special care with his toilet, he opened the door of his temporary prison, entertaining no fear of his reception down below.

If angry creases should weave themselves upon his father's brow, Paul would uncrease them by the fervent impress of his repenting kiss. And as for his mother and sister, he would fairly storm them. He would give them no chance. No more speaking to his sister's back !

Here is the room. Gay, debonnaire, and confident, he stepped into the apartment. His mother and sister rose from the table, and with open arms he ran—and stopped—stared—and convulsively gasped, "Where's father?"

.
Paul was fatherless.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER THE ABYSS.

As when the Adventurer upon an unknown river—lulled into happy dalliance with the wave, and charmed by the exciting vistas of unknown peaks before him—stays his oar to try some bordering fruit, tastes, and falls to drowsy carelessness and soon to sleep.

And suddenly is waked by thundering voices of the flood, and sees sheeted Terror lifting white arms to pull his shallop over the abyss. So did Paul find himself wrecked, but not destroyed. In a moment transferred from a prosperous voyage in the uplands, to a black ravine, sunless and flanked by threatening rocks ; baptised in suffering and panting from the assault of Pagan Fortune. And foreseeing that he will never be able to steer his barque to the same waters again ; for not only was his shallop gone, but to go against the stream was impossible.

The great catastrophe was an epoch. The fortunes of the family changed completely : by the death of the Head, and Paul was accounted the wretched assailant of the happiness and well being of his circle. It was inevitable that a greater estrangement than ever should ensue between himself and his mother and sister. The latter, whose betrothal was delayed, was sadly changed : her former brilliance had departed, and she was, every now and then, stricken with impatience and anger at the unwelcome intrusion of difficulties and sordid apprehensions.

His mother, always loving, yet felt a gulf between herself and her son, for she had not inherited her own nature implicitly, but it was complicated by traits from some distant ancestor, and him from some equally remote progenitor. The same was true of his father. Hence Paul was left to himself for the most part, and on some accounts he did not quarrel with the new attitude that his relatives had assumed. His absorption in the future of Israel and his ardent curiosity to ascertain what the Prophets had really foreshadowed, so dominated his soul that all other interests held him comparatively by a very slight chain. So the boy was ever plaguing his teacher and worrying the Rabbis, whom he knew, for interpretations of the dark sayings which he could not comprehend, and supplying interpretations of his own which favoured his current predispositions in reference to his people and their National future.

The females did not allow him to neglect the craft of weaving, in which he was instructed, and they were determined that he should become proficient.

The boy, of course, had no proclivities towards monotonous mechanical industry ; but as compared with many other occupations, weaving was not altogether antagonistic to the temper and climate of his mind.

When the hands demanded little guidance from the brain, and the brain could keep upon its separate path of action and discursive explorations—the weaving seemed even to stimulate, and give liberty, to his other excursions. But that was by the ancient pagan mechanical contrivances.

Under steam machinery in this modern day, the pressure upon mind, nerve and body to keep pace

with the tyrant machine demands every strained moment of watchful attention, and leaves the operative no margin for large entertainments of thought outside his exigent task.

Study and his craft left Paul little vacant time, but whether engaged or at leisure, two reflections constantly recurred. One was to vindicate his father's memory by exalting the Jewish Faith and Destiny. The other was to be strengthened in the belief—the thrilling consciousness—that his Eternal Father in Heaven had predestined him for great accomplishments through his allegiance to the pregnant predictions treasured up in the Hebrew scriptures in reference to the approaching Advent of the Messiah. He was to go to Jerusalem—a bounding thought—and after a year he was to live with his sister, when married, in the Metropolis of the Race.

Meantime Paul, although the Synagogue, like his own bereaved family, frowned upon him, whispered about him, and regarded him as an object of suspicion; he was not looked upon by the Rabbis with similar disfavour. The Schoolmaster frequently praised his diligence and smiled with pleasure at the earnest and penetrating questions that he put. But the general consensus of opinion was that he was an odd child, not an ordinary boy; taking a separate path; frequently abstracted; and overmuch occupied with the religious questions which separated Israel from the rest of the nations.

He came and he went—a saddened and changed youth—with loneliness as his chief companion. But he was never unacquainted with “Voices.” Voices which urged him to do particular things, to abstain from other things, or to address himself to other

persons ; and when they could not be reached, bringing their names before his God, in private prayer.

The chief subject, however, of his "Voices," never entirely absent (except when a cold vacuum occupied his breast, on the rare occasions when he challenged Heaven's displeasure)—the chief subject was the ever-recurring assurance that he was destined to do some great thing for God and the World. What exactly it was, he knew not, but he felt beforehand, that his life's task awaited him. It waited for him, like the Lion which was sent to avenge the disobedience of the Prophet. Was it, indeed, an avenging ministry of Satan, and he to become an example to his own and subsequent generations of betraying the high cause of the Supreme—a name that was to become a by-word—a name at which the World would grow pale ?

At certain times the strange contrasted experience of a sacred Peace, and the awful possibility of Ruin, would present itself to consciousness.

The youth, one day, transferred himself to the courtyard, and standing in a black angle of shade, he seemed to be looking into a Hell, where bubbles arose from the Pit, bursting and subsiding with the laughter of mocking fiends. Then anon, came the dear old Voices, in crowds, to brush away the delusion. The warm streams of the four rivers of Paradise bubbled with resonant laughter in his soul ; and lifting his happy face, with parted lips and kindling eyes, he screened his hand and looked into the unfathomable depths of the azure vault above, which God has sent as the all-embracing girdle of his love. Ah ! Paul, Paul ! It

was all to become true. The Lion of Remorse was awaiting him on the road to Damascus, and another Vision, which was to change the whole face of the World.

His mother and sister were looking at him from an upper lattice. The latter nudged the grief-stricken woman, "Look at him, as if moonstruck! He is mad! He is mad!"

When he was younger and was taken to the Synagogue School by the Pedagogue, he would frequently pull the arm of the domestic slave to catch a better view of a certain cataract which emphasised itself, or waned away on the lower slopes of the Taurus.

As his eye was detained, ever with the yearning desire to get up to it some day, the tantalising spectacle would become withdrawn by intervening buildings. Then another peep could be gained between blocks of houses; when anon (giving a wrench to the arm of the Pedagogue), the view became open, and a stretch of Plain allowed the boy's gaze to be more satisfied.

Unsatisfied yearnings! The lot of every mortal heart!

Millions every morning, dragged by the arm of Necessity, debouching from railway stations, trams, and ferries, are being pushed by the invisible Pedagogues into dark offices, behind counters, into great workshops, or factories, or down mines. But it is something on the way to have a vision of Liberty—the waters that know no chain and that swell with the Voice of Freedom, and race away with joy to meet the majority!

And not unapt was this mountain cataract to symbolise the waxing and waning of the measure of faith felt and possessed by the Christian Believer.

At times Paul saw it diminished to a thread, and anon he would exclaim and cry out, "Look! Look at the cataract! It is as broad and white as the Pillar of Augustus! but so far away! Oh! I long for a holiday. I would join in its joyous song. Rocks I am sure are being tumbled before it."

Sometimes the vision was entirely obscured when a steaming vapour would spread itself over the entire Taurus range. At other times clouds would descend and sheets of rain absolutely close the view. But everyone knew that it was always there—seen or unseen, it was ever doing its beneficent work, a standing and living monument. It might be the genius of the place and the Preserver of the City and the Plain.

At length Paul had his opportunity. He had a holiday, and was bent upon solving the mystery of the waterfall. No longer a child but a budding man, he was beyond leading strings and determined to shake the beard of the old cataract.

What more delightful than to explore the unknown! The vision that had attended his steps from childhood was now being approached, with larger liberty and with assured confidence. Paul walked and walked. Somehow it never seemed to come nearer. Mile after mile. Did it really retreat before him? He sat down for a few moments upon the bank. Plaguey Torrent! "I am pressing onwards to see—What? The very thing, which as a tame and sluggish pool is merely sauntering past me. A mile or two, nearer the mountain, the very drops that are scarcely stirring the reeds on the margin, were transfigured into a mighty Archangel, wielding flashing swords and pouring quicksilver upon black

lustrous depths, making them mirrors of the Almighty. All is illusion, Faith a phantasmagoria. For solid realities we must seek elsewhere than in religion."

Turning round, he was somewhat disconcerted to see a leopard, full-faced, staring at him.

It had been running among the brushwood after small game, and gone to the Cydnus for a drink. The exquisitely supple creature was a breathing statue, only the arrested tail was slowly declining. Paul sternly fixed his eyes upon his. The whole Christian world was suspended upon that instant, but the calm changeless decrees of the Eternal supported that chain. The animal could not support Paul's gaze. It broke up with a howl and became a river of flashing gold, forcing its way with bounds and springs among the brushwood, making a lane towards the oaks and beeches, whence it came.

Paul prayed unheard, but was not unheard above. And the "voices" were within him. Looking down, he saw a small pool upon the dust, droppings from the fangs that for the time were dipped in the river. "It might have been my blood instead of that," he mused. Then a portion of the 84th Psalm came to his mind: "Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee, in whose heart are thy ways, who going through the valley of weeping make it a well; and the pools are filled with water. They will go from strength to strength; and unto the God of Gods appeareth every one of them in Zion.

Listening and musing, and gazing—no longer vehemently desiring to arrive at the mocking-phantasmagoria before him, he stood looking back towards Tarsus.

There were voices in the air. What was it? Miles

away, faint but evident, they were echoes of great cries and cheering.

Billows of sound were being propagated from some great centre of loud rejoicings, and radiating in all directions. To be sure, it was the day of the great Olympian races, and his own Jewish School holiday happened to coincide with that declared by the Pagan Authorities. He would walk back smartly and see what might be seen.

Striding along with vigour in every limb, he knew the joy of strenuous exercise and spurned the ground, yard by yard, as he drew nearer to his goal. Yes ! it was doubtless great cheering—cries of joy. But after all, what is the bother about ? Good fellows though, many of them, and their long training and abstinence brought them into fine models for the sculptor.

And how animating when a great throng lifts up its voice, announces its fervent faith, its spontaneous emotion, its pronounced determination.

Another flight of sounds in the air, the cries and echoes beating the Empyrean as with innumerable wings. And the sweet calm bosom of the sky, patient and sympathetic of all that is thrust upon it—curses rejected and blessings treasured, muttered memories of evil suppressed, golden words and wishes permitted to arise and tint the clouds when the ever smiling sun looks out from his chamber and greets mankind with an embrace, sometimes too warm.

Running now, and with the human voices louder in his ear, succeeded by a heaving silence, the breathing suspense of multitudes, Paul hastened on. There was a suppressed wrangling ; beginning of victorious shouts, then cut off, resumed, rising into certainty,

anticipated ejaculations of names of favourite competitors. Yes ! No ! Now then, come up—Hurrah ! Hurrah again ! Paul was at the margin of the crowd, a motley of backs before him. When a mighty shout burst like a fountain up to Heaven. Cries, applauses, cheers, the whole multitude was energised by the very spirit of the Demos.

“ Two prizes, by Jove ! and a young chap, too,” said one.

“ What is it ? Who won ? But he had not long to wait. The name that was uttered all around. Could it be ? The pupil of Nestor, the successor to the great Athenodorus. Yes ! it was Amyntas and none other. Forbidden to associate any longer with his early friend—that acquaintance having entailed such tragic consequences—he could not approach him, and if he saw him in the street, he cast his eyes down. Ungrateful it was to one who had saved his life at the risk of his own. And now, dodged by an unhappy destiny, never to be rightly understood, Paul would be compelled to see and join in the universal pleasure of the crowd. They hoisted the victor to a four-horsed chariot,—wearing the simple wreath of wild Olive, cut from the sacred Olympian grove. With wild acclamations the crowd impeded the steeds, and as Paul pressed forward under an irrepressible impulse, the victor recognised him, and cried out.

“ Ah ! my early friend, what have I done, that you should drop my acquaintance ? Will you only know me in the day of triumph ? And yet, upon my struggles on your behalf, depended greater issues than these.”

The chariot was beginning to move, when Amyntas turned to give Paul a last word, “ Though you will

not see me now, I shall see you hereafter, when all misunderstandings are removed."

Paul covered his face and hastened to extricate himself from the crowd.

CHAPTER IV

PASSOVER AT HOME

THE Passover drew nigh, Immemorial Festival ! most notable of all the institutions bequeathed to the chosen people to observe sacredly, year by year. Done to the deaf ears and blind eyes of the mocking world ! Knowing not that the despised Hebrew Race held in pawn all the glad fortune of the multitudinous nations !

At Paul's house there was a sad change. The place at the head of the house was vacant, and the son of the house was held chargeable of the death of his father. Some children that had been placed under the care of Paul's mother while the parents had gone to Jerusalem, helped to fill up the miserable vacancy. The old Rabbi, who had cast so good a horoscope for the hope of the house, was dead, and the mother bitterly reflected that the grey beards' predictions promised to be fulfilled with a difference.

It was a weariness of the flesh to go through all the ceremonies, meant to be in commemoration of Israel's great emancipation, while the widow's soul was desolate, and while directing the slave how to place the Pascal Lamb, she involuntary dropped a tear into the dish.

All was now ready, only a remnant of the usual company. When, there being no Elder present, Paul rose up to explain to the younger guests what the Festival meant.

“ O ! gasped Paul’s sister, “ Look at him, mother, Make Paul sit down. The ruin of the family. The idea ! Why don’t you stop him ? I shan’t hear a word he says ; nor touch a morsel he presumes to bless.” Then hastily she rose from her place and banged the door behind her. Guests went out after her. The sobbing mother went after her, but the proud, obstinate girl was not to be moved. The Pascal Lamb got cold, the very devil was in her, and was not to be cast out. The poor children set up crying and the whole anticipated feast was blasted. Such was Paul’s home.

What young Paul would have said, had circumstances permitted, was to dwell with glowing emphasis upon the marvellous deliverance effected for his enslaved ancestry in the land of Egypt by God’s chosen servant, Moses. He would have recounted the lovely story of the threatened life of the Great Deliverer as a Babe and how— placed in the ark of bulruhshes, he was committed to the careless wave. How the daughter of Pharoah struck by the splendid child, would adopt it, and have it reared by an Hebrew nurse, timely identical with the mother of the foundling. Ah ! poor foundling *World* destined to be rescued from the waters of affliction, not knowing its real mother ! Paul would have told them that the descendants of Abraham, heirs of God’s special blessing, charged with blessings for all nations, were, meantime to know the bitterest bondage, rearing in the land of Egypt monuments of slavery which the sands of time can never cover. How the free progeny of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were entrapped to lose all the rights of man and made to make bricks without straw, wherewith to build the Treasure Cities of the King. How Moses and Aaron, his brother, were given power

to shake the determinations of Pharoah, and by ten awful stripes which fell, not upon the backs of Israel, but upon their oppressors, compelled him to loose his grip, and set the people free. But not before every first-born of the Egyptians and their cattle had perished under the sword of the Destroying Angel. The little guests would have quivered as they heard the old, old story; how, when the people were safely housed, though in their wretched tenements, the blood of the innocent lamb, sprinkled upon the lintel, averted the gleaming sword and only flashed in the proud dwellings of the task masters; and how, over great cities, alike as in lonely Egyptian homesteads, there was one universal cry, for the heirs—the holders of the birthright were slain—there was not a house but held its dead. The Palace and the cottage were one.

How, after 400 years, the long story of treacherous crime came to an end, and the Egyptians mingled funeral rites with urgent entreaties, accompanied by generous largesses, bidding their profitable servants “Begone! Haste! haste! lest we all be dead men.”

How then there was another Passover—the passing over the Red Sea, which, when the Egyptians essayed, they made their grave. And the chosen Race were taught in the Wilderness by manifold miracles, and educated to claim victoriously the land promised them to possess. How by sin and shameful departure from the Commandments given them to keep they were deprived—ten tribes of them of their portion—and only two left. Whereupon, still persisting in failing their inheritance, they were exiled to Babylon, and permitted to return, under sufferance. And

ever since the dread and loathing of idolatry—has sunk into their souls—though deploring and wondering why the promised Messiah delays his Advent, bringing them political deliverance and making Israel the Dominant Kingdom in the world.

But Paul, only a youth, and also yet to be enlightened by an Apocalyptic vision, of course, could not have penetrated all the significance of the Passover rite, and the Gentile Churches which he was to found, remain after two-thousand years, still unaware of what it held for a glorious future.

True, indeed, that a spiritual bondage is a greater evil than a material one, and that to be free from chains of sin and blindness also, like a Sampson working for the Philistines, is a greater enfranchisement than to be lifted from degrading poverty and injurious industries. Nevertheless, so long as the world's population, five-eighths of it are forcibly remitted to half starvation as the reward of facing tasks which are compensated quite below the standard regimens for convicts (and cramping of mind coincides with insufficient nutriment for the body), there is a Messianic Hope, involved in the Advent of a Restorer of all things Economical, as well as cleansing and turning of hearts towards spiritual Redemption.

Therefore, the accompaniments of the Messiah will be as complex as they will be comprehensive. And all that the Christian Churches celebrate periodically should be charged with meanings, not mentioned, when the rite is remembered.

Our Blessed Lord who is destined to lead the entire family of Manual Labour out from the bondage of Egypt into the Promised Land, is at present feeding his Father's flocks in the land of Midian.

That blessed pasturage has been going on now for nigh two-thousand years, but from the Burning Bush, the Hedge that separates undeserving poverty from undeserving wealth, now aflame with burning shame—from the very Hedge which is not consumed, there comes the voice of God, crying to the Son of Man, to reveal Himself and return to complete the entire Redemption of the World.

Herein lie the predictions of the Christ—that such troubles are impending as the earth never saw before. For the Pharoahs are not minded to let the people go, nor stay the pitiless grind of human lives between the stones of a harsh and remorseless competition. There has come into the ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth, the cries from the modern Egyptian Bondage. From the tenant slaves of the soil the world over, from the slain sweaters in the wealthiest commercial capitals. From the victims of the tricksters under Truck, the equally helpless victims of protective enactments which the hirelings are compelled to contract themselves out of. From the subjects of increasing non and under employment, while inexorable Rent marches on. From trades which are both useless and pernicious and form an engrossment in providing material requirements which closes almost every avenue of air and light from the spiritual sphere—these cries have reached the Hedge of the Privileged, still yet unconcerned, aflame with shame and condemnation, and the Privileged themselves, unable to see how the inextricable tangle is to be straightened out, join with the general cries of the world, supplicating that God the Father's voice may be heard, bidding His dear Son—His well-beloved—complete the work, which His cross began.

The New Commandment that ye love one another, exemplified by the Lord's washing of the Disciples' feet—readiness to undertake the lowliest service—this spirit inwrought into laws, social usages, and superintending every economical undertaking, would revolutionise the face of Society. But mankind is held in a vice, by institutions suggested by internecine strife. Force, for selfish ends uniting with fraud, have left their serpent trail in the subsequent ages of human history. Hence as far back as the first known Empires, slavery was an institution, and the only exciting diversion was a marauding expedition.

Dynastic wars may have their foreseen termination, but wars for Commerce are interminable. They are longer, bitterer, and inspired by real necessity. How to feed the people is the *ultima ratio* of every national dispute.

And yet the Messianic prospects are that nations will beat their swords into ploughshares, and learn the art of war no more.

The signification of that is the complete remodelling of the Social Order, for hitherto War and Commerce went arm-in-arm. Before the prediction is fulfilled, Commerce must become Community.

So while the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth are assailed by cries from the fields of modern Egyptian bondage, all that the Prophets have spoken is speeding the appearing of the new Moses—antitype of the old, who is to lead the captive Proletariat into the Promised Land—Land of a decent and sufficient existence. "I will not henceforward drink of the fruit of the vine," said our Lord, "until I drink it new with you, my disciples, in the Kingdom of my Father." The bitter herbs will disappear from the table of

Humanity. A new vintage, ripened by the Sun of Love in excelsis, will fill every cup with joy, and the portions of Bread and Drink, found sufficient, will be partaken of with thankfulness, in equal measures, in Righteousness and Peace.

CHAPTER V.

PAUL GOES TO JERUSALEM.

It was determined that Paul should go to Jerusalem without delay. He was lost in his Rabbinical studies and his relatives grudgingly agreed that it was the best for him to become a Rabbi of importance, but it was a poor look-out for a maintenance, still less for rendering assistance to the widow. "Oh, let him go," said his sister, "the sooner the better. You remember," addressing her mother, "how he upset our last Passover, preventing us from keeping the Law, and making the children scream." He is capable of anything, a good riddance." Then, lifting her head from her embroidery, and with an evil gleam in her eye, she resumed, "But he might do something for us, if he would play into the hands of the High Priest, in the matter of the Sacrifices. A mint of money is made out of the peasants, when the Festivals come round."

"The High Priest can fix his prices for buying and selling and become as rich as Cræsus." "But then," with contempt curling her lip and her head bending again, she said, "Paul could not do that, the thing he calls a conscience would stand in the way. No, mother, he is quite content to let us starve. A nice son you've got! Thank Heaven! I shall soon get out of this house into my own."

Meantime the prospects of beholding the capital of his favoured race filled Paul with quiet transport. He could scarcely believe it. His constant pacing to

and from the school, the tantalising interruptions that prevented his contemplations of the waterfall—the impatient impulse to force the secret of the Cilician Gates, were all superseded by the grand Cornucopia that was about to be tumbled at his feet.

He liked to go down to the Harbour to see the ships depart for Jaffa, and when he saw friends parting, he was thrilled within by the wished-for, but lagging moment that was to number him among the happy passengers. The great main sail was hoisted, the breeze flapped it for a moment, but then lent its shoulders to press against the full blown sheet and the intended citizens of Jerusalem were borne steadily to their bourne.

Paul would strain his eyes, following the retreating craft. And when cloud and sea mist swallowed it up, he would turn homewards, congratulating himself because only another fortnight would separate him from his desire.

The tedious days would not fly, but he had many a talk with a merchant of the synagogue, who traded with Jerusalem and who told him that Herod's Temple eclipsed anything that the Pagan world possessed. It was immense, costly and magnificent. But it was the art and the genius of the Greek and not of the Jews, and hence devout Jews were not enthused, and Herod was generally hated. "But who gave the Greeks their genius and arts?" enquired Paul.

"I suppose they were gifts from the Lord of All," said the old merchant.

"Then," rejoined Paul, "may not the King make the Gentiles pay tribute and use their gifts to glorify the Lord of All."

"My son," said the good old man. "When I take,

with my goods, into my market at Jerusalem, *plain dealing* and deny myself covetousness, I believe I shall bring gifts, which will adorn the Holy City better than by gilded marbles and precious stones."

"Yes! yes! I know," said Paul. "These solid things, gold and marble, are only shadows of the invisible substance and the unrevealed beauty we cannot rival."

"But, my son, you are talking philosophy. Where did you get it?"

"Oh! it was not mine, replied the youth. "I used to talk with a forbidden friend who studied in the schools under Athenodorus." He was silent for a moment and then enquired, "Aristides—for I will give you that new name—where do you buy the things that you sell at Jerusalem?"

"Sometimes from the slave-owner, sometimes from the middleman. But why do you ask?"

"Because I was wondering whether you took those precious gifts you spoke of into the fields and factories where the slaves and free peasants worked."

"Oh!" said the merchant with a gesture and tone of impatience. "God rewards *them*. They are God's peculiar family. They cannot be paid in this world properly. *Their* pay-day is when their working days are over, and God is just."

"All the bond-slaves then," said Paul, "are a chosen race, and they will have their Passover in Heaven. I wonder if another Moses is coming to redeem them, here and now!"

The merchant shrugged his shoulders. "May be! But not in my time"—and under his breath—"I have a family to provide for" More was muttered, but it could not be heard.

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There was bustle in the family house at length. Paul's mother was going over his wardrobe and getting him to put on certain garments which his father wore, but for the most part they were found too large. Paul did not seem likely to grow into a tall and bulky man. Both the feminines were diligently plying the needle, and looking anxiously, that the wind might stand in the right quarter.

It *did* stand. Paul was delighted. He must down to the harbour without more ado. He pressed earnestly the hand of his old Pedagogue, kissed the warm lips of his tearful mother, and the chill cheek that his sister turned to him—called out impressively—"You have not forgotten my books and especially the parchments?" The statue of the chill cheek raised its eyes, and muttered icily, "Did you want them?"

"Good gracious," stormed Paul. "Are you going to bereave me of my children?"

She ran upstairs and pulled them out from the cupboard where the sticks were kept and threw them down to him. One fell!—a child hurt. He rapidly scrutinized and hugged them, tucked them under his toga and marched away with the feelings of a man who had just escaped reprieve.

He wanted to reward the porter who bore his luggage and put it on board and was unable adequately. But, among the passengers, he espied his friend the merchant and borrowed from him a small amount. "You must remember," said the old man, "what I told you, that the chosen race—God's heritage—will have their Passover in Heaven."

"I am so glad you are going with me," said Paul. "I was to be met at Jaffa and accompanied to Jerusa-

lem, but on this part of my journey, my first voyage, I expected to be alone."

He bowed, in playful deference to the junior, and took kindly to the lad.

"I had a son," but he stopped suddenly and gulped in the throat. It only made the old man kinder.

The usual crowd on the Quay—a motley, busy, vociferating crowd. Friends cramming idol images and charms into the hands of the passengers. Also animals and birds to be sacrificed on the voyage. At length the hardy mariners cleared the gangway, dragged it on deck, slipped hawsers, loosed the sails, swung the helm, and Christianity, with its fortunes, was borne away from Tarsus.

Without being a Thallassion, Paul was fond of the sea, and had spent occasionally a night with fishermen, but a voyage of a week perhaps, according to the weather, presented itself as a novel experience.

The ship cleared from the cloudy waters of the Estuary and stood out to where the blue waters seconded the sky. Then the rocky heights of the mainland extended themselves right and left, and piercing higher the embracing clouds, Tarsus kept defiantly its shining helmets of silver.

Passing several small islands, many uninhabited, Paul fixed his gaze upon the watery horizon, for the Painter of the skies was mixing wondrous colours upon his palette as the sun began to dissolve before seeking his couch.

An ignorant and shallow criticism has attributed to Paul a want of appreciation of the aspects of nature. This will be referred to later on, but let it suffice at this juncture to remark that the deepest feeling is generally incommunicable by vocal utterance, and

that to search for such comparatively trivial traits of character as critics desire intruding themselves when the great Apostle is inditing his Epistles, would be as unseemly and ridiculous as to look for exclamations over scenic attractions in Cæsars' Commentaries, or in the despatches of the Duke of Wellington. Paul was weighted with an enterprise—a mission and a goal that blotted out almost every vision but the Highest.

But Paul, the callow youth, it was right and noble for him to stand rooted upon the deck and watch the wondrous brush that was blending the colours of the sunset. And thus and so he was mute and indisposed to speak. And little did he reek that 1,500 years later—beyond the western horizon—in the ultima thule of the Roman Empire, he was to give his name to the noblest Fane, in the noblest city, of the noblest Empire, and the greatest, that the world had yet known. And that to him, Paul—a Jewish youth bordering upon sixteen, leaning over the gunwale, instrumentally, uniquely and entirely that great Empire was due.

The Heavens were now bending with burning lips to kiss the world with a "Good-night." Upon the far extended horizon gold and precious blood, priceless and divine, were washing away the murky vapours of sin. Still motionless upon the deck, Paul saw shadowy islands loom and retire. Occasionally the dim uncertain glimmer of a fishing vessel and then again a fixed light upon an island. He transferred his gaze from these feeble uncertainties to the glorious vault above him, the same that Abraham gazed upon, changeless and sure, the sign and seal of God's covenant with His chosen people.

Yes ! thought Paul, all the fortunes of the nations depend upon our fidelity to our part in that covenant. "All the nations shall be blessed in Him." With the proud consolation that he was a son of Abraham, he disposed his wraps, made a pillow and fell to sleep after vespers, in the high and pleasurable excitements of turning the first leaf of a momentous chapter of his young life.

In the midst of his slumbers he was awakened by the Heavenly choir, which at several previous crisis of his life had visited his charmed ear. Their voices were louder and more exquisite than usual, but as he lusted to hear them stay, the harmonies melted away as though the angels had hasted to fly upward. His lips parted with pleasure, he lifted his eyes to the steadfast blue, gemmed by the smiling sureties of God's faithfulness, and soon passed into profound and dreamless slumber.

Rousing himself when dark shadowed cliffs eastward showed themselves leeward, and struggling to recall where he was and what had happened, he was thoroughly awakened by the sailors, who in the early morning had to discharge a portion of the ship's freightage, and found that Paul's position was in their way. It was only a small port some sixty miles south of Tarsus. But going to the other side of the ship he gazed wistfully at some high land, far out to sea. What was it ? He was told it was *Cyprus*, and he rapidly reviewed what he had heard of it—copper mines, Ethiopian slaves. The island colonised by Phoenicians, Greeks, and Jews. At Paphos Venus arose from the sea and a polluted worship arose which made it celebrated also in Daphne and elsewhere.

Then, with that gift of premonition often possessed by those who are destined to figure upon historical occasions, Paul looked earnestly and felt within him that this looming island was waiting to welcome him. His voices told him that he was to play an important part there. Therefore fixed his gaze, long after the cargo had been landed for the Syrian port. He saw its rocky coast narrow to the dimensions of a Roman galley and then join the multitudinous waves on the horizon line. He was the only passenger to pace the deck thus early, and before he had begun to busy himself with the novel experiences of his journey, he committed himself, thankfully, to the gracious guidance of the God of his fathers. Unrolling his psalter he read, "He that dwelleth in the secret places of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in Him will I trust." (Psalm xci. 1-2.). And these comforting words gave the key to the music of his thought for that new day.

The few incidents of each successive day had an infinitely soothing effect upon his spirits, and then every moment was bringing him nearer to the realisation of the desire of his earliest years—*Jerusalem!* City of immemorial traditions, whose records wove together chapters of deepest shame and tragic calamity. And therewith, other chapters of wonderful deliverance—Israel's peculiar glory. What was that Pharos? What that mole? What that dangerous roadstead? Whence the numerous merchantmen at anchor and fishermen dodging about the pier? It was *Jaffa*, the port of Paul's destination. There he was disembarked and several of his nation were waiting to receive him and conduct him to Jerusalem.

He was spotted—not a bulky chap, but well-grown. The introductions were not so cordial as he had hoped for—the eyes of the Elders had a cast of scrutinising suspicion, as though letters from Tarsus had not been without reservations, qualifying his welcome. He felt it instantly and it gave to his response a restraint, which confirmed unfavourable anticipations. But, in spite of this uncomfortable and disappointing experience, Paul was busy with curious and interested eyes, watching inquisitively the crowd upon the landing-stage. And amid the moving picture there came upon him again the feeling that had invested distant Cyprus with such mysterious interest for himself. Jaffa was also a congener—He was to leave his traces there.

It was said of the soldiers of the Grande Armée, that every private's knapsack held concealed a Marshal's baton. Paul seemed to know beforehand that his future career was predestined, and though as yet, far from having undergone that renovating change which was to establish quite a new relationship between himself and his Lord, yet he was already getting persuaded that it was not for him to construct plans for achieving desired and private ends, but to commit himself to the great Arbiter of his destiny, who would condescend to interest Himself in directing his steps daily. All that he was to pass through would only lead to confirm his recommendation to his future converts, to banish care, and to care only to listen to the silent monitor within. By sure tokens he knew the Voice of God. By equally sure tokens he knew the whispers of God's adversary and his.

Now, at this early stage, he could take notice of the beneficence of the State, though taught to regard the Roman Power as the great enemy of the Jew.

The terrible civil war that afflicted the Roman Dominion had opened a new chapter in the history of the world. Imperialism had gained the victory, and by the struggle it had fitted itself to make its sway beneficent. Octavius had given peace, and with it prosperity (very unlike the issue that ended the bottling up of Napoleon—when war cut the leather trunks of the financiers and sent gold flowing among all the combatant nations, and peace stopped fortune making, and brought the peasant to his grave). The master of the Roman world paid assiduous attention to opening up new roads to commerce—ridding the Ægean from pirates, and suppressing Banditi on the passes and high roads, which had been infested and threatened every profitable exchange of commodities between the East and the West.

Commerce revived and sprung up to unheard of dimensions when security was daily increasing. Merchants and Guilds hastened to make votive offerings in the Temples raised to Augustus. The Posts went with regularity, soldiers accompanied convoys with escorts, Imperial messengers were ever on the roads on Imperial business, and as Paul was borne sometimes by horses and sometimes on camels, he could remark, and did not deprecate the numerous buildings, which sought to Romanise the Judean Land, and gave to the monastic seclusion of Palestine that touch of the Cosmopolitism which made him proud of his citizenship.

“The child is father of the Man.” Paul, young as he was, had thoughts stirring within him, and leading him to respect the Roman law and order. He was a nascent statesman, and it was the large views that he cherished for his nation which led him to sympathise

with the Imperial idea. Let the Romans go on to prepare the highways for the Messiah. The Imperial power will put down every other Heathen dominion ; and then the kingdoms of the world subjugated, the final subjugation will be by the Messiah, whose law will be that of Moses and the Prophets, interpreted by His own. The candle of the Lord would envelope the Governmental Wick. The title, "The King of the Jews" would mean the "King of Kings," and universal empire would be seated in the ecclesiastical and Civil Governments of the world.

Such were the reflections which were quickening his brain and warming his heart. Having a *penchant* for travel ; for acquainting himself with new people, new lands, new customs, new governments, new religions and he viewed the Idol Temples with no passionate intolerance, (his ignorance and innocence supported the sentiment), because they were permitted on sufferance and the time was drawing near for the fulfilment of the decrees pertaining to the Abrahamic Covenant. The nations would bring their glory and honour to Jerusalem and he would be instrumental in aiding the great Apocalyptic Consummation.

The Roman road was crowded. What various costumes, merchandises and tongues ! The scene was animated, he had only two days to get over, and he would behold the City girded by sacred hills and be received within its holy walls.

An Inn gave hospitable succour to the Hebrew company. Night drew nigh and the stars of Abraham bent over the ardent student, who was to live for many future months at the feet of Gamaliel. His heart was full of happiness, thankfulness and peace.

Turning on his bed, the happily weighted lids of the youth just opened and closed again.

Next day, at evening, he hoped to arrive at the capital. All was busy preparation. The mules, horses, and camels were packed for the journey. Couriers, carts, Roman officials, merchants, soldiers, transporters, thronged the road. The animated scene made no moment stale, and Paul, at his early age, with his sensitive heart and mind, impressionable to novel experiences, was in a condition to be highly pleased with everybody and everything.

The caravan stopped to water the beasts after a long cool spell of steady travelling. The villagers made a brave show, for a pause at a well was the event of the day, and in the leisurely Eastern way, conversing, eating, sleeping and marketing went on for the length of some hours, for the sun in the meridian was barely supportable. Paul was disappointed to be told that he should not reach Jerusalem in daylight after all. And, indeed, after two hours, he saw the sun begin visibly to wane, enriching the clouds, while a crescent moon showed itself among the white cirrus fleece.

The Caravan was progressing when all had to draw aside, to allow a black multitude to come on ; escorted by a few mounted soldiers and a few carts. What did it mean ? As the posse advanced, however, a peculiar metallic sound, in regular beats, struck the ear. Yes ! without doubt, it was a party of slaves, or captives, but whether prisoners or free, seemed uncertain. On it came, of all ages, except that the aged and infirm were given springless vehicles—carts without seats. It was not humanity, but the expediency of catching a favouring wind that caused this degree of mercy to

be manifested. It was a gang of convicts, which had participated in an insurrection against the Roman yoke and were being exported to work in the mines of Laurium.

This spectacle changed the current of Paul's favourable consideration of the Roman state. The immigrants who were Romans, loudly expressed their approval. The Jews who preponderated, bestowed blessings upon the condemned patriots, and ground their teeth with muttered curses upon their oppressors.

Immediately the whole cavalcade became vociferous: arguments, contention, objurgation poured forth. Some merchants forgot their gains and dismounted to have duels with their antagonists. One wealthy man received a stab from a dagger: he was drawn aside to the hedge. "Why did he not bleed gold?" remarked a cynic, and "he might have procured a conviction against his enemy for treason."

A chill wind began to rise. The arrival at Jerusalem, which promised to be such a joyous hour, threatened to become one of deep dejection and painful remembrance. Every period of exalted happiness has its Nemesis in a corresponding reaction.

The harmonious character of the start at Jaffa, and which continued during the first day, was now entirely changed; and the former good companionship became a wretched troop of discordant disputants. It seemed not unlikely that a pitched battle might be the consequence of that convict transportation. And, indeed, something of the kind would have impended, had not the sun kept on its march and gave the silent warning of blood.

In the darkness Paul's spirit fell. Mountain masses, round shouldered, but seamed by deep ravines, were grouping themselves together. Suddenly came a vision of battlements, built of darkly roseate stones, losing themselves in purple shadows. Towers and incomplete erections cutting the twilight sky. A plentiful sprinkling of twinkling lights among crowded clusters of houses—all placed upon a platform of hill—a city calix, surrounded by sheltering petals. Such was the flower of the Jewish state.

In the silence and the darkness, the air was pierced by the shrill blasts of the silver trumpets. The Priests blew because of the sun's descent ; and among the lambs to be sacrificed were two regularly provided by the Cæsar. A notable homage and admission on the part of the head of the Roman power, that among the Pantheons of the Empire, the King of the Jews ought to be recognised as a guardian of the State, if not given a pre-eminent place.

The painful spectacle of the menaced prisoners and their fate, the probably fatal sequel of the quarrel with the wounded merchant, the resonant trumpets jarring upon the tried nerves of a highly strung youth who had been played upon by thrilling experiences during ten days, and the now engulfing darkness of the night, which forced the companions to separate and know each other only by their voices, the many enquiries of their way, the groping along with lanterns, all conspired to bring on a fit of sickness. Paul was wretchedly ill, his friends conducted him, they climbed a steep ascent, aided by steps, but treacherous by their worn condition.

With warm thanks, though almost inaudible, he acknowledged the kindness of all, but some insisted

upon assisting him upstairs, so fainty he appeared.

In truth, when the door was closed upon him, he fell upon his bed, and an involuntary flood of tears relieved him.

CHAPTER VI

PAUL AT JERUSALEM.

WHAT is more happy, more stimulating, than the first exploration of a new city, especially if it is notoriously famous and has always had the eyes of the world fixed upon it. Yes! The eyes of all the officialdom of the Roman Empire were fixed upon Jerusalem, and, although Rome was the civil mistress of the world, all the religions of Pagandom were obliged to own that Jerusalem was their master.

That insignificant strip of Syrian territory had ever been regarded by adjoining Empires as something "canny." They might have swallowed it up many a time, but they steered their armies round about its borders and made detours to prevent aggression upon either of the ancient Hebrew kingdoms, but a kind of awe seized them, when either expediency or lust of conquest tempted them. Jerusalem was more than their oracle of Delphi. And Egypt and Eleusis, it was recognised, held the key to mysteries of the Divine Government and the Future Life, in a degree far less than the city which David founded and Antiochus, to his cost, had raided. The dread of all the other kingdoms was always upon this one. Although Samaria and the ten tribes could be safely forgotten, the remnant tribes and their ancient capital, by the common consent of conquerors, were to be dealt with in quite an especial manner, lest the gods should smite with failure their meditated enterprises.

Rome, to which the secret of Government was conferred in a superior degree to any other power, had to use all its art to win the allegiance of the Jews without resorting to mere brutal force. In all the courts of civilized nations Jews were to be found, educated youth was not by any means deemed fully equipped for philosophical studies, or for the higher branches of politics, without having first drunk, not shallowly, of the divine wisdom of the Hebrews. The spiritual power of the books of the Jews it was impossible to ignore. Although their teaching was a standing challenge to the other reigning religions, those who stood in the opposite camp could not gainsay the uncanny influence that those sacred books instilled.

Paul, when his sickness had relieved him, and he had had some hours of refreshing sleep, was only aware in a moment of subconsciousness of impenetrable darkness ; and being quite unable to comprehend where he was, or how he came, he resolved not to bother, but allow his old train of thought sleepily to resume its sway. Turning upon his side, he began to mutter.

“ Wherever I am, being as I am, a son of Abraham, I am, and shall be, a puzzle to the world, the great puzzle being that for the time we are subject to Rome, instead of its Master. See all our Prophets, meantime whether in an Arab’s tent, or in—in—” Here the puzzle overcame him, and he neither knew nor cared, for he slept.

Slept deliciously, was awakened by a multitudinous rattle of hammers and chisels, while bright shafts of sunlight made patterned lattice work upon the wall. He was in a small room, with mats, a stool, a chest, basin and ewer with water. The walls bare, except

that two strips of Papyrus in Hebrew characters, saluted him with the words of the lxiii. Psalm, 5-8. "My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips. When I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches. For Thou hast been my helper and in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth hard after Thee. Thy right hand upholdeth me."

How dear and familiar the passages! Now he sprang up from his mattress, threw back the coverings, flung open the lattice and gazed down to a courtyard some fifty feet below him.

Blessed calm and peace! Bright sunshine and a blue vault above. Rustling flights of doves, a twinkling fountain playing far below, but its gentle and refreshing dripping much interfered with by the multitudinous clatter of hammers and chisels. Voices also, harsh and commanding, some great piece of business was in hand. Shouts, directions, strainings. While he was listening a tap came to his door and his father's friend entered, to enquire how he did.

"You have far exceeded our ordinary time for our first meal, and I have already been to the Synagogue, but we did not disturb you, for you badly wanted rest last night. Dress now, however. Make your ablutions. I have spoken to Rabbi Gamaliel, of blessed memory, and I have arranged for an interview three hours hence."

"Gamaliel and Jerusalem"! thought Paul!
"Splendid"!

"You must make a good breakfast, I know you will be doing too much before night, unless checked. May Heaven attend you in work and word."

With a happy smile the youth immediately obeyed.

The elder was retiring when Paul called after him.

“Pray let me know what means this incessant masonry with hammer and chisels?”

“Oh! it is the new Temple that King Herod is erecting. It is already the most magnificent thing in the world. You will see it presently. We are on Mount Moriah.”

Paul gasped, “Mount Moriah! the very spot where the Covenant with Abraham was made.”

When his host had left him he fell upon his knees and poured forth his heart, that God would make him ever ready to become a living sacrifice, and through Him be made to advance the realization of the great promise that in Abraham's seed should all the nations of the world be blessed

Gamaliel had had letters from the Synagogue at Tarsus and was prepared to meet the Neophyte. On the way the source of the noise which awoke him was disclosed. Great quarrying was going on and likewise stone dressing of enormous blocks, some of which demanded the exertions of hundreds of men to move, and among them were many in manacles. Convicts and slaves, uniting both characters, not infrequently under the same lash. The spectacle was not very pleasing to the young man, for youth has the prerogative of being able to see essential justice more clearly than those who are committed to the struggle for existence with the weight of wife and family tacked to their backs. He saw the white marble, the towers and pinacles, gleaming against the azure depths of a radiant sky. He admired, and promised himself great pleasure in skirmishing through the city, but now the first business was Gamaliel. To reach him,

in the unfinished state of the Temple, it was necessary to pass under the angles of great crosspieces of timber. Though placed, of course, without reference to Crucifixion, they yet, on a huge scale, prefigured the Cross ; and this young Jew, creeping under one angle of the beams, found it a stumbling block, and to his Greek guide, foolishness. Passing under this yoke, the door to Gamaliel was before them, through which he was to go in and out, finding pasture, Paul trusted, for many months.

The venerable Rabbi had just dismissed a class of students and was waiting the appearance of the new comer. Paul prostrated himself at his feet, who lifted up the young man with a mien that was not altogether cordial, and at once he felt that something in the letters had checked the flow of a warm reception. What in the name of Heaven could it be ? But grave, beautiful, venerable and benevolent, the ancient and sacred master of the law appeared to Paul another Father and he longed to be received as a worthy disciple.

In spite of the seed of suspicion that had been dropped in his mind, the Rabbi, after a shrewd look seemed pleased with Paul's honest eyes, fired by enthusiasm, and bade him be at ease, while he entered into an intimate and sympathetic conversation.

At first it was only concerned with enquiries after members of the Synagogue at Tarsus, but soon his mentor passed to his attendance and studies of the Law.

"Some of the Rabbis," said Gamaliel, "are wont to place the Mischna, the Targum and the Talmud in a rank above even the Scriptures ; with them I can never agree. The traditions," he went on to say,

“of the Scribes and Pharisees are to be respected, but when it comes to comparative values, there is no question that the historians and prophets, who supplied the contents of the Canonical Books, were inspired in an especial manner and degree, placing their writings in a category unique and incomparable. I have to defend this position against detractors.”

The aged Rabbi paused and then enquired of Paul
“Where you ever in Nazareth?”

“Nazareth! What is that? I never heard of it. I have never been out of Tarsus before this.”

“Leave me a moment,” said Gamaliel.

Paul was wondering what impression he had made. It seemed to him that the great doctor was interested, and regarded him favourably.

Presently he returned with another Rabbi, both beaming benevolently upon him. This younger doctor immediately said, “You have told us that you have never lived at Nazareth, and have no relations there. Did any Galilean youth (younger than you by some three years) come to your city spending hours in enquiries of your Rabbi at Tarsus, hearing and answering questions?”

“No! I cannot remember. I, myself,” said Paul blushing, “was considered rather over eager in plaguing my teachers and disputing with them. I never met my double in that respect.”

They rose and retired together to a corner of the room and conferred in low whispers. Paul could overhear something of the colloquy.

“There was a remarkable resemblance in the matter and manner of his enquiries, but that other youth was far before this one, though much younger: what days we had with that one! their fragrance like the

incense never left the place ; we were, it seemed, upon the threshold of the Holy of Holies. Would to God he would become a pillar in the Temple, and, like the Temple itself, never be overthrown."

The Rabbis' did not reseate themselves, but gave Paul, severally, their blessing, appointing for him days and hours when he was to come for instruction, and when dismissing him said, " We had a dear youth who came to us four years ago, you reminded us of him. I hope you will imitate him."

Paul, now released from the nervous interview, and in high spirits on account of his favourable reception, presently found himself in the Market-place, deeply interested in the motley crowd of vendors and purchasers. A Publican was chasing a man from the country, who apparently had not paid the market-toll duty. While he was being beaten and a crowd was gathering, Paul muttered to himself, " Our Messiah will establish righteousness and rebuke defrauders." As he stood, he felt a hand upon his shoulder and, turning and looking up, he was surprised to see the friend of Gamaliel. Had he been watched ? What had he done ? The Rabbi only kindly said,

" Don't get losing yourself and your friends be unable to find you. The dear youth we spoke of, gave unwittingly grief to his parents, but it was doubtless his Father in Heaven who kept him staying at our feet. Remember, however, you must not grieve your father or your mother."

A shadow fell upon Paul's face. Alas ! he had already brought sorrow enough upon his parents, but unwittingly, God knows.

Dispirited now ! he broke away from the crowd and ceased to fathom the cause of the disturbance.

A vision of the dear old Tarsian days presented itself to his mind, the Cilician Gates, his old, but distant, friend the Cataract. He was interrupted in his ruminations by a great crowd which was sweeping up the court of the Gentiles in the Temple, and he allowed himself to be carried with it.

“My countrymen are a turbulent lot,” thought Paul, “for another storm, evidently, is brewing.”

People were running towards the holy place, and Paul, who had as yet not entered the Temple, having reserved it as a *bonne bouche*, towards the evening, now got himself entangled with a crush which was making for the Shallecheth Gate. He could not get at the cause of the commotion, some said one thing and some another, but it was found later that a schoolboy, holding his father’s hand, had secreted among his books a little plaster image of Minerva, which through negligent strapping had fallen out upon the sacred floor. Another boy had picked it up, and was meaning to restore it to the owner, when a zealous abhorrer of idols seized the supposed criminal, caught, as he imagined, red-handed, and castigated him severely.

The father of the innocent boy was a man of influence, having a small army of friends and business dependants, for he did a big trade with Sadducean merchants who thrived upon the schemes of Herod.

These came to defend their patron and to avenge the injury done to his son. Soon the Holy place was spotted by innocent blood. The noise reached the ears of the Commander at Antonia. A Cohort appeared, the multitude were awed, the gates were closed, and among those thrust out was Paul, whose insatiable thirst could not be allayed that day. He began to retrace his steps to sacred Moriah. There

he seated himself upon one of the immense blocks of dressed stone; and opening his favourite Prophet Isaiah, read, "They shall not hurt, nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people, to it shall the Gentiles seek and his rest shall be glorious."

Filled with joy at the glorious prediction, he saw his bedchamber not far off, and made his way to his kind entertainers.

CHAPTER VII.

PAUL WITH GAMALIEL.

THE Rabbi and the disciple—the teacher and the taught, coming daily for intercourse, there sprang up between them warm sentiments of mutual regard. The revered instructor was attracted by the uncommon intelligence displayed by the pupil and his attentions were stimulated by the discovery that to the youths' mental endowments were added strict piety and high conscientiousness.

The pupil made such rapid progress, and entered with such zest into the discussions that arose, that he was permitted a freedom, not accorded to the rest of his classmates; and was invited frequently to accompany the Rabbi when occasion took him outside the walls.

Then leaning upon the young man's arm, Gamaliel took up a softer tone, and astonished the diffident disciple by the intimate avowals of his inmost convictions. The general effect upon Paul's mind was to abate his enthusiasm for the Law as it stood, but to increase the love and admiration that he must entertain for his Preceptor, renowned for his spiritual interpretations of the Jewish code.

Gamaliel frequently revealed his inward dissatisfaction at the elaborate prescriptions and the comparative unimportance of the subjects concerned, and the magnification of the shell while the kernel is being shrivelled up. "Even the Temple services," he would say, "though I grant their political and

national value, I feel are destined to cease and be discontinued in their present form. The externalism of Judaism will undergo a resolution into a universal religion, whose essential spiritual truths will appeal more directly to the spirit, and not have their symbols obtruding themselves so as to be mistaken for realities." Paul was disappointed at the forecast, desiring that the imposing celebrations at Jerusalem should increase in splendour and impressiveness, instead of retreating to the simplicities and silences of the Synagogue. And yet, he did confess to Gamaliel that there were times when the still small voice spoke to him more persuasively at the Synagogue than even when in the day of atonement, Israel was prostrate before the Shechinah, and the High Priest having placed his hands upon the scape-goat, transferring the sins of the nation upon the animal's head, the choir of Levites sang antiphonically the 51st Psalm. Then, pained at the least disparagement, even in thought, against the religious system of Israel, he looked up enthusiastically into the face of his spiritual Father and spoke of the increase of Proselytism. "Our Jewish faith," said he, "is eating away more than the fringe of the Pagan worship and our Proselytes are the best people in every rank. They are in kings courts and are found even among slaves. Yes! the way is being prepared for the Messiah—a highway—You know my father, I have dedicated myself to advance the cause of the Coming One, and the best preparation for His glorious advent will be the multiplication of Proselytes. Give me thy blessing and let me speed on."

"Willingly! dear son, but remember it is the path of suffering—the Passover must be eaten with

bitter herbs. Were I not a Rabbi, stricken in years and unworthy to invoke the holy name of Jehovah, I would devote myself in like manner, to make Proselytes. Among the Grecian and Roman cities they are increasingly numerous. The wretched mythological fables of the Gods naturally disgust men of intellect and possessed of some glimmers of inward light. Besides I am encouraged to believe, and I rejoice in it exceedingly, that there is really a possibility of the whole Roman Empire becoming subservient to the Jewish faith—the worship of the only true God and His coming One—the Messiah. King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”

“But,” said Paul, “precedent to all this, there must be a purification of the present Jewish practice, and we must put down heretics. If we are the sons of the Abrahamic Covenant and are false to the institutes given us to observe, or propagate erroneous notions of the Messiah that is to come, attributing to Him merely the sword of the Conqueror: or, on the other hand, if any should preach that the present Jewish economy is to be overthrown, before Messiah’s rule is made prevalent—that He is coming to destroy the Law, instead of fulfilling it—let Him be accursed: for should such notions prevail, we, as Jews, would be discarded by the Almighty, and the Covenant would drop. If such a root of error were to arise amongst our brethren here, I would be first and foremost to scotch it. I can say, truly, that I rejoice in mercy and am ready to forgive; but there are limits when the future of the whole Roman Empire and the known world are at stake. When the enlightenment and purification of the wise, skilled, and powerful nations become dependent upon the Covenant-keep-

ing heirs of the promise, then I could violate my native disposition and become a bloody persecutor of such as endanger the worlds' great Hope."

"Tut! Tut! Tut! my dear son, be calm! and remember that *you* are not at all *necessary* to carry out the divine decrees. Any lamb in the flock, legally pure, can redeem the whole of Israel. What do you imagine yourself to be?"

Paul reddened and said, "What do I imagine myself to be? A son of Abraham, devoted to the service of the Messianic Kingdom, whose establishment is threatened by perverts, innovators, treacherous conspirators and faithless misconstruers of the Prophets. And I have seen scores of able, amiable and gifted sons of the heathen, who would adorn *any* kingdom, especially the Messianic Kingdom, if they were enlightened as we are. I want to see them brought in and I could wade through blood to do it.

"Could you, indeed!" said Gamaliel. "Ah, my son, there are some who have a zeal for God which is not according to righteousness. You spake to me the other day about the Essenes, and you were very much impressed in their favour. And there is another great preacher who is drawing away thousands."

"Yes! Yes!" interposed Paul eagerly. "John the Baptist is a Prophet and he is preaching that the Messiah is about to appear. The only strange thing about him is that he can do no miracle, as Elijah and Elisha did. But I except John's disciples and the Essenes from censure; indeed, I must confess I have a sneaking regard for both and would gladly stay longer at Jerusalem and watch the progress of events, for I believe with you that the times are ominous. But, as you know, I have arranged to leave for a

period of two or three years. I cannot longer be a burden upon my married sister and her husband: and that home was never a sympathetic one. A merchant in gums and spices has given me a post in his household in Arabia, to teach his young family. I shall be leaving in a few days."

The old man pressed the hand of the young disciple.

"That is what I dreaded," sorrowfully ejaculated the Rabbi. "You have become my son, and now you are leaving me. I will see you as frequently as I can before your departure. Let us walk together daily, after the mid-day repast. My favourite walk is down to the Pool of Siloam, and again up the Mount of Olives, whence we have such a fine view—plenty of shade and lovely groves all around. I have a presentiment that one day all these grateful shades will be cut down."

"Not certainly by Messiah," said Paul, "for they are its chief adornment."

"Ah!" ruminated Gamaliel, "we know not what the Messiah may do for us, or against us, we may be faithless to Him after all and earn His repudiation."

The young man smiled reproachfully. "You are a dreadful Cassandra, my beloved father. Don't utter such things. What has occurred to move you to such grievous misgivings?"

The old man's eyes filled with tears and replied, "The shadow of an impending calamity—our greatest crime and our saddest loss."

"But," said Paul. "It will not be irretrievable. It will not be unpardonable. Our God is a God of long suffering and His tender mercy endureth for ever."

Gamaliel only sighed, but afterwards said, " My dear son. Remember during your future career, for I foresee that you will have an important part to play in the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. Remember, I say, that the principles of that Kingdom are long-suffering, goodness and mercy, as well as loyalty to Heaven and all the unique revelations first communicated to our chosen race, in trust for the world—' Put up your talk of swords, for those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword.' "

. . . . The day before Paul was to leave for Arabia he went to take his last wonted walk with the revered Rabbi. He noticed with sympathetic concern that the old man's steps were increasingly feeble. He leant heavily upon his disciple's arm and stopped twice to draw breath when climbing the steep ascent towards Olivet.

" Dear father," said Paul. " With great concern, I notice that of late, your natural force has much abated. What is the cause ? Is it mere decay—the advance of years ; or is that aggravated by mental depression, such as you communicated, and the cause, when I respectfully remonstrated the day I announced my approaching departure ? "

" Beloved son," he replied, " you have rightly suspected the chief cause and my consequent weakness. How can I view the state of things among us without the gravest solicitude. Where corruption is working in both the Ecclesiastical and civil hierarchies, the sun of commercial prosperity only aggravates the disease and hastens the fatal and final consummation. I see, looming upon a lurid horizon, the daughter of Jerusalem doomed to accomplish her own destruction, leaving only a remnant, to drag

on a dishonoured existence, under the ban of that God who begot her to be a precious and favoured people. What an opportunity discarded ! What privileges put away ! Warnings despised, entreaties contemptuously scorned ! It is indeed nothing new in the history of our nation, but something more astonishingly criminal is about to be committed."

Here the old man covered his face with his robe ; caught hold of a branch, doomed to be lopped by a soldier of Titus and would have sunk to the ground had not Paul supported him. Profoundly moved, but unable to speak, the young man clung to the aged, while a Script from the Prophets escaped from the hand of the former and descended to the mire, for the skies had been weeping. Paul moved to steady himself and inadvertently trod upon the holy writing. Gamaliel, fired with sudden energy, caught sight through his dimmed eyes the fateful predictions of the Prophets, and reaching down unavailingly.

"Alas ! Alas !" he exclaimed. "The words of the Prophet shall not fall to the ground. And you, how could you dare to tread them underfoot ? You, too, are doomed to mourn their inevitable fulfilments."

Paul took them up, soiled and defaced, and read—

"Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself, and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary ; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war, desolations are determined' (Daniel ix. 26). 'Dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me, they pierced my hands and my feet' (Psalm xxii. 16). 'Awake ! O sword ! against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts, smite the Shepherd and the

sheep shall be scattered ; and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. And it shall come to pass, that in all that land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined and I will try them as gold is tried ; they shall call on my name and I will hear them. I will say, ' It is my people,' and they shall say, ' The Lord is my God ' " (Zech. xiii. 7-9).

" But, revered father, you will persist in reading these gloomy passages. Let me read on and you will find something more cheering."

" Behold I will send my Messenger and He shall prepare the way before Me ; and the Lord, Whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in. Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming ? and who shall stand when he appeareth, for he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years. And I will come near to you to judgments and I will be a swift witness against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts. For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed " (Mal. iii. 1-6).

"Now," said Paul, "take comfort!"

"Comfort!" exclaimed Gamaliel, "when two thirds of the people are to perish. 'I change not.' It is a double edged sword, if a third will be spared, the two thirds must perish."

"It may please God," said Paul, "yet to temper his judgments with mercy. I shall ever seek to keep Israel in the old paths. By so doing I shall hope to avert or modify the threatenings uttered against the guilty people."

"No! No!" rejoined Gamaliel. "They have corrupted themselves and you want to keep them as they are. It is change we want. The Messiah will unfold new Laws, and let the withered husks give room to the precious seed to grow. Our present Law is as good as dead."

"Ah, my father, we shall never agree upon that."

Then the two—the aged and the junior—slowly got through the thicket and came to the summits of Olivet. At which point, the Rabbi, breathing heavily, cast himself down and gazed across the city westwards, espying a group of harvesters in a corn field.

"See!" said Gamaliel. "I doubt not there are Gentile gleaners among them. One of the maxims that I recommended and which is becoming a general practice, is to allow the poor of the heathen to have equal privileges after the crop is gathered, with the sons of Abraham."

"Yes!" murmured Paul, "I remember it, and also you enjoined upon us not to omit the customary salutations to wayfarers, whether they be Jew or Gentile."

"Here," exclaimed Paul, "is a figure approaching us—a young man wearing a Phrygian cap. I must certainly not neglect customary politeness."

He came along, shouting at the top of his voice, with the air and gait and mood of careless abandon, piping a hymn to Cybele, his face sunburnt, his eyes dark, but with a subdued fire within them and his arms and legs bared and tanned to a rich orange while he was carrying a sycle and a cooking pot. Evidently a cultivator of a market garden. As the lowly Gentile approached, he doffed his cap and at the same moment teacher and disciple uttered the Jewish salutation.

“Why should there not be peace, when the Messiah’s universal rule will compel the nations to dwell together in unity, acknowledging their mutual service.” Paul saw that Gamaliel was going off into one of his reveries, and he simply waited to catch what intermittently might fall from him during his reflections. He heard him mutter, “Privileges are necessary, and deprivation of privileges are necessary, poverty, ignorance, calamity and suffering all necessary. Were all privileges levelled, where should we find a steep ascent to give a breathing to our lungs ; and where should I find a young disciple whose sonship comes about by his acknowledgment of my superiority and his desire to profit by me ? ”

Then he addressed himself to the disciple,

“ You are going to Arabia. Those flat monotonous plains of sand, once a sea bottom, will not afford the same refreshment to the eye as the inequalities given by the mountains of Judah and Hermon, neither can a large population be supported by those arid wastes. Nevertheless the fertility of the mountainous regions is maintained by the infertile wilderness. The rich fields of Galilee owe much to Arabia, the sandy wastes of the world and the precious drops of rain are nearly

related. The heathen are necessary to us, both before and after the Messianic Kingdom. It is not Jehovah's design to make a superior sort of animal, but altogether a nobler creature—Sons of God. To the gradual creation of that climax, many unprivileged nations must, in their travail contribute. Therefore, stand not upon your privileges, ye sons of Abraham, but humbly cherish them, always remembering that Arabia and the Promised Land were given to the offspring of the same great Progenitor."

"Quite true, my father," responded Paul. "The Arabian sun will never blind me to the heights of Judah, nor to the Phrygian races in Roman Asia. They shall become tributary to Jerusalem."

"And," interposed Gamaliel, "we shall have to acknowledge their tributes in art, in philosophy, in politics, in science and literature. The Kingdom of the Messiah will use all these tributes, hence I willingly salute this other cultivator, or harvester—this time from Italy—though a native of the land of our oppressors."

The humble member of the Pagani passed by and received the salutation given to the former. They watched him as he went, one foot dragging a bit, as though he had met with an accident. Then Gamaliel turned and spoke aloud. "Have you done anything to sustain the life of the world, Paulus? This man, like the other, is a cultivator. Our Doctors despise the countryman, but if it were not for his labours they would all drop into Sheol before their time. Every kingdom, since the birth of time, was created and supported by the poverty stricken and enslaved cultivators."

"I *have*," replied Paul, "done something to sustain

life, or at least, I have learnt a trade really necessary to man. My Cilician cloth shields men from the elements, makes shade from the burning sun and also shelters from the dissolving cloud. I have learnt the art of weaving."

"I am glad of it," rejoined Gamaliel. "To practise it will give you valid grounds for self-respect. Unfortunately, many Rabbis, who, with a proud humility, recommend their pupils to acquire trades, would not for the world attempt to make a livelihood by their exercise, for they know too well that the most useful members of society are the least rewarded. Help me to descend, Paulus."

They threaded the groves again, and when clearing them, they were soon upon the road to Jericho. But they were involved in a crowd—all streaming away towards Jordan. All classes were represented—rich and poor, priests, Levites, merchants, labouring men, soldiers, publicans, Greeks, Romans, barbarians—all moved by the keen prickling of their consciences, under the preaching of John the Baptist, wending their way to confess their sins and be immersed by the Anchorite.

"I must go to-morrow," said Paul, "otherwise I would certainly stay to see what this new Prophet is doing and saying. I hear that he is very clear about the Messiah and announces that his arrival is very near at hand. Who knows! during my absence in Arabia, that the great event shall have occurred! But how is it that no women are going to be baptized? Either they have no sins, or they are too black to be washed away by Jordan."

"No! No!" said Gamaliel, shaking his head. "But women are usually the favoured channel for

communications through Angels to mankind. Then it is for men to publish the messages abroad. I see several women in the crowd."

"I heard it stated that a remarkable visitation of Angels had appeared to a Jewish maiden at a village in Galilee, and it concerned the Messiah. But not to favour one sex over the other, this wonderful Prophet, who is baptizing in Jordan, his father had a visitation as he ministered at the brazen altar of incense, foretelling the glad tidings of his first-born in his old age. It is a gracious ordering of things that when there is really golden news to communicate, the world is not kept waiting, but a fleet messenger flies swiftly and imparts it to a priest, occupied with his appointed duty."

"Ah!" cried Paul, "it lifts one off his feet to imagine what the Messiah will be. How majestic! glorious and divine. Solomon, in all his glory, cannot be compared with Him. The Temple, magnificent as it is, will be made more so by His entrance—the envy of Rome and of all the world. And there will be no poor in Jerusalem—no need to go a-begging to support our own poor. Singular that there should be such dearth and scarcity, when such huge amounts of money and costly offerings are brought into the Temple coffers!"

"Don't speak of it, my son. There are scandals—no wonder the Temple officials are among the crowd for baptism. It will be difficult to cleanse them. The priests in high office, are some of the worst in the Sanhedrim."

"Then the Messiah will use His sword," said Paul. "I believe in the sword when the Jewish State and prospects are endangered. The foundations of the

new Messianic Kingdom will be laid in blood, but not in innocent blood—that would be a crime unforgivable. Our Messiah will discern between the guilty and the innocent. He is to be our Judge.”

“But now, my beloved master, I must bid you farewell. I shall continually look forward to seeing you, and deplore that our separation must be so long.”

Gamaliel seemed much moved. “When we *do* meet,” said he, “it may be under very different circumstances.”

Instructor and pupil found their way through the crowds that were hastening to the Fords of Jordan, then at the Pool of Bethesda they parted. They had passed sites on the way, memorable for all time and eternity, Calvary and the Garden of Gethsemane. Only three years were to elapse, and Paul, who was deprived of the ministry of Jesus, was to see that same Jesus glorified, and speaking to him from the unapproachable Light.

Gamaliel, still oppressed by melancholy forebodings, was, just at the moment, inspired to say to his favourite pupil, “Beloved youth, although I foresee that our nation is doomed to become a mark and a gazing stock for the world’s reproach, yet I feel that *you* will be conspicuously faithful and successful in establishing the sway of the Messiah. You will first oppose Him and then become His slave.”

Strange prediction! that filled Paul with mingled feelings of horror and joy. What could he mean? “Explain, my revered master.”

“It is not given me to explain,” he replied, “but this much I can predict, “you, like my nation, will tread the dreadful path of Messianic rejection, but

afterwards your mourning and your repentance will be turned into joy."

His profound disquietude unappeased, Paul fell upon the neck of the Rabbi. They both wept in secret, and then he slowly paced away to continue his preparations at the home of his unsympathetic sister—his little nephew was in his cradle—afterwards to do for his uncle a notable service. Then, on the morrow, mounted upon a camel, which snorted with pleasure and hastened its paces as he withdrew from the city, he was left to his reflections and the new page of his experience now turning.

CHAPTER VIII.

PAUL IN ARABIA.

AWAY north-east of Lebanon and skirting Damascus, the caravan proceeded. He was going to no centre of agriculture, neither to any city of artisans. He was going to an *emporium*, where nothing was made but money. The highest skill and the severest toils never can compare with the results achieved by those who have never laboriously acquired crafts, or have unremittingly wooed nature's caprices after they have done their best upon the soil. The people who get out of the prison walls of poverty are those who studiously avoid labour and skill, and being really dispensable, are therefore highly rewarded! their substance being left to their babes. They do, however, study human nature, and having to traffick in foreign countries and become acquainted with foreign customs and beliefs, they acquire a largeness of view and suggestions of statemanship, which lead the merchant class to become associates with the World Rulers, to whom finance is *not* dispensable, and not unfrequently, the Merchant has become a Monarch. That the road to fortune is trodden never by the indispensable people, but by the dispensable, comes about by the established worship of the god Business, whose votaries have completely eclipsed in devotion and sacrifices the other divinities who were not sprung from the earth as business was.

Paul's employer was a worshipper of business, and did not care to study anything but his own interest,

but he wanted for his children an education which, being useless, would separate them from the really useful people, who are perennially doomed to poverty. The Jews had a genius for entering the useless walks of life, and were, therefore, generally prosperous. They enjoyed learning the easy alphabet, which involved no severe apprenticeship, consisting of two signs, Cheap and Dear. They studied to make things cheap and then they studied to make the same things dear. This course of study resulted in spelling *wealth*. But it did not make a blade of grass or a blade of a knife.

Paul's camel is happy, it is treading the yellow sands of Arabia. Golden sands, for wealth is to be got in Emporiums where nothing is made but money. Palmyra was an Emporium exchanging the products of the East and the West. It was a Venice, not in the Adriatic, but in the deserts of Arabia. But the Empire of Zenobia was far forward from Paul's days, and still further off was the rich Republic with its business and its Doges.

Paul, after sitting at the feet of Gamaliel, wanted a period of detachment from the endless subtleties of the Law, a season of retirement from the claims of both studentship and accommodation to his sister's alien household. He could, he hoped, listen with less distraction to what his mind and conscience was whispering. And he was fortunate in finding it. His pedagogy did not engross his entire days, far from that. He had two dear little children, boy and girl, of his patron, who brought to their teacher's knees, amiable manners, bright intelligence and honest eyes. Could these last be preserved throughout a long career ?

Yes ! because both of them were born with silver spoons. When the morning lessons were over, he had the rest of the day, practically, free, until the pupils were older. Hence he could chew the cud at leisure of all he was taught to acquire in the school of the Rabbis,—not without some misgivings as to either its value or authority. Many an hour did he spend revolving in his own mind what it was expedient for him to do, if he should be an efficient agent of the Messiah. His interior sense assured him that he had an important part to play and that a crisis in his personal history was arriving. From the parapets of the roofs of his patron's dwelling he surveyed the sheltering hills, whence silver rills descended, now no more, and then Eastward the boundless plain. Often at the daily pause of the Siesta, when the brooding calm of the sultry silence was at its highest, it seemed to him the whole world was in a state of hushed expectancy, waiting for His arrival. He that was to turn rivers into every desert. He that would make it blossom like the rose. And the mirage was on the horizon. Cities, palms and waters. Jerusalem that is above. But above the mirage mighty configurations of thunder cloud. Is it the Messiah ? Was that lightning His sword ? Does He come as Conqueror, or as Shepherd, leading beside the still waters ? Perhaps as both.

Another noon after the siesta and after his midday prayers, he saw from his favourite perch a cloud, no larger than a man's hand, and it was making towards the little emporium city—from the illimitable Eastern horizon. It was a moving cloud and a human one, accompanied by roaring, but not of thunder. Presently could be discerned horses and camels and

an Arabian escort conducting a bevy of caged and ferocious creatures which had been gathered to adorn a Roman triumph and to minister to the excitement and wonder of the circus. When the cavalcade stopped, the slumbers of the citizens were broken by the confused howlings and barks of carnivora, tormented by the last stages of maddening thirst. From the Bazaars and into the empty lanes, unworthy to be called streets, the scared citizens gathered to inquire into the cause—and when they gazed into the flaming eyes and threatening jaws of the monsters, they vented their spleen by prods and strokes from their staves, between the bars. Paul, instead, hastened to the nearest well, and drew the waters of Life even for the common enemies of mankind. The first bowl that reached the cages was Paul's, and when a noble lion lapped this present life, his eyes became human and he switched his tail delightedly. Ere the second bowl had arrived, the beast's tormentors were at their old game—but Paul drove them away and the irritated animal resumed its human look and extended a muffled paw as if to shake hands.

Everything comes to an end—the shouts, the commands, the laughter, the scuffles, the disputes and the consoling denarii chinking into the merchant's pockets—everything came to an end, though the road to be traversed seemed to dispute the postulate. At all events, Silence descended again upon the extended scene, and her sceptre passed voiceless over the Emporium. Equally voiceless the black shadows crept up and swallowed the lizards, which did not stir. Paul, instead of resuming his couch, went, as on tiptoe, the solitary pedestrian, to recline

under a favourite palm tree, and was kept awake by pondering upon the fate of Jerusalem.

How or why he knew not, but dreadful apprehensions seized him. Jerusalem, he dreaded, was about to commit an unpardonable sin. Had he done right in forsaking her ? Did not the people need guidance lest they should become the prey of an impostor ? And it will be two years before he can return. Then to comfort himself he turned to the cv. Psalm : " Seek the Lord and His strength ; seek His face evermore. Remember His marvellous works that He hath done ; His wonders, and the judgments of his mouth : O ye seed of Abraham His servant, ye children of Jacob His chosen. He is the Lord our God ; His judgments are in all the earth. He hath remembered His covenant for ever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations, which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac : And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant ; saying—Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance : when they were but a few men in number ; yea, very few, and strangers in it. When they went from one nation to another, from one Kingdom to another people : He suffered no man to do them wrong ; yea, He reproved Kings for their sakes ; saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm " (v. 4-15). Then the Psalmist recounts the fortunes of the people under Joseph the Preserver and Moses the Deliverer, concluding with words which gave balm and purpose to his troubled breast : " For He remembered His holy promise, and Abraham His servant ; And He brought forth his people with joy, and His chosen with glad-

ness. And gave them the lands of the heathen, and they inherited the labour of the people : That they might observe His statutes, and keep His laws. Praise ye the Lord ” (verses 42—45). Then passing on to the Psalm cvi., his fervent prayer was voiced in the 4th and 5th verses : “ Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that thou bearest unto Thy people : O visit me with Thy salvation : That I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with Thine inheritance.” Then Paul confessed his own sin, and confessed with the Psalmist the sins of his nation in the 6th verse : “ We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly ” ; until, in verse 40, “ Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against His people, insomuch that He abhorred His own inheritance.” “ Nevertheless (verse 44) He regarded their affliction, when He heard their cry : And He remembered for them his covenant, and repented according to the multitude of his mercies. He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives. Save us, O Lord our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto Thy holy name, and to triumph in Thy praise. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting : and let all the people say, Amen, Praise ye the Lord ” (verses 45—48).

His heart now much relieved, he allowed himself to yield to the influences of the hour and sunk to slumber. So long and so well did he sleep that when one of his young pupils aroused him, his lazy lids could not immediately comprehend his situation. Sitting up, the Heavens had darkened, and long and broad lay the crimson sign of the departing

sun. It lay above the land he had left. "Let the blood of Thy people, O Lord, be precious in Thy sight, though they be not innocent." Such was the ejaculation of the perturbed neophyte, and with the child's hand in his, the young man and the boy paced homewards.

"You slept very soundly," archly observed the young lad, lifting up his bright face.

"Sorrow was the cause and consequence," muttered the Preceptor.

"What are you sorry for?" said the lad smiling.

There was no answer, only the warm, soft hand was pressed within that of the Tutor's. The boy felt that he must be silent, too. But, though hesitatingly, he began again:

"The lion will not forget you. He wanted to have you," and began a queer grimace, and then withdrew it and stopped.

Then the Tutor extended his arm and enclosed the young frame and pressed him to his thigh, and the child heard him mutter, "Unto the third and fourth generation," and then, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the Kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among the nations" (Psalm xxii. 27—28). Paul went on to Isaiah: "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the

heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, said the Lord " (Isaiah liv. 10 and 17).

Then, suddenly, when the puzzled young face was again lifted towards his, Paul removed his arm, and grasping the lad by the body he lifted him up and kissed him. Dropping him instantly after, he said, " Now let's run races. Who will get first to the Temple ? " It was a small Roman Temple outside the walls, in whose columns Rome paid homage to Grecian beauty, of the matchless Corinthian order. He gave little Mercury long odds and they started the great race—but the little demon, after a while, stopped to laugh, to fit to burst. Then, rushing against his Tutor, catching his breath, he roared, "*You're only pretending.*" For in truth, the very statues and the three vultures that had mounted guard were forced to laugh also. Paul entered into the fun of it—showed himself lame and played such antics like a cripple, determined to win the race, and also to give to his pupil the prize, that all the gods in Olympus were ready to die.

The little demon ventured to give a playful slap against his Preceptor's thigh, and impressively exhorted him to be real. " Give me only fifty stadia," he said, " and I'll beat you." So the great race was resumed and the goal was Home. But Paul proved to be quite impenitent, and the result, which ought to have been telegraphed, and by wireless, to all the inhabitants of the Globe, was after all left undetermined. They laughed so at the final that neither of the competitors could stand upright and none of the four feet reached the door, but were spread in a fall. The noise at the door also was so great that the

startled slave, followed by the Patron, enquired, not in Latin or Greek or Hebrew—but in slang Palmyrene, the equivalent being, “What’s the row?”

CHAPTER IX.

PAUL IN ARABIA, CONTINUED.

THE months rolled peacefully away. Paul was more and more deeply interested in the prophetic imports of the various passages which spoke of the great mission given to Israel to perform for the world.

The dear children whom he taught were the progeny of honourable parents, who despised the worship of the neighbouring Temple and felt that in securing a Hebrew tutor for them they were preserving them from much ignorance and folly, not to say also, degradation.

Moreover, as the wife frequently reminded her husband, from the day that Paul had crossed their threshold they had uninterrupted peace and prosperity. The children respected and loved their teacher, and were satisfactorily progressing in their education.

The parents readily acquiesced in Paul's suggestion, that the children should make themselves acquainted with the sacred Books of the Hebrews ; so he translated for them selected portions into Aramæan, which being records of Israel's marvellous and heroic story, enthralled their infant understandings. He gave them passages to learn, on the days when he must visit the small local Synagogue, and one by one. idol images and significations were removed from the walls and passages, voluntarily, by the father and mother.

Observing this, Paul did not think to open any acrimonious controversy upon religious matters, but

trusted to silent light, which, if the souls of observers were transparent, would certainly penetrate and begin to dispel their darkness. He trusted also to his supplications on behalf of the whole family. He believed in tribal responsibilities and in federal headships, which were capable of earning corporate blessings or judgments, without infringing individual liabilities. He consequently felt increasingly that his time was not wasted, that God had given him work to do, and that there was a prospect of the whole family becoming proselytes. With that family Paul felt himself more and more identified, but never forgot that this period was necessarily intercalary and that the termination of his withdrawal from active participation in the great movements in Judea must be impatiently anticipated. As far as possible he kept himself *au courant* with what was going on : by enquiries from the travelling merchants and from his patron, who frequently visited Jerusalem. Thus, as the news of this pregnant and wonderful period was brought to his ears, his impatience grew, while he also rebuked it to himself, being reminded that the march of the divine determinations can neither be accelerated nor retarded, and that men are but flies upon the chariot wheels of Destiny.

It was some time in the last months of the third year that Paul began to be oppressed by the liveliest apprehensions concerning the famous metropolis. He began to be agitated by some signal tragedy, which he surmised was being enacted then, and whose shadow pressed upon his consciousness. After his tutorial duties, during which he had been much preoccupied, he sought relief in vain, by opening the pages of the Prophets ; for alas ! their predictions only

aggravated his depression. From them he went to his couch, and after many turnings dropped into an uneasy somnolence. Presently he was awakened in darkness and in terror. "Oh! Jerusalem! Jerusalem!" he exclaimed. "Would that I could die for thee. What are they doing there? Something awful, unheard of, has happened." He started up from his pallet on the roof and strove to penetrate the impenetrable darkness. "Where, where," he exclaimed, "are Abraham's stars?" A rent in the black cloud just then opened, but it only disclosed an evil meteor that flashed downward across it. Yea! another follows it, more ominous than the first, sword like and serpent like. The rent closed and an army of lions growled in the distance.

My nation is in an awful crisis, bethought the young man, and not mine alone—the whole world is involved. He lay wretched, trembling and grief-stricken. Then he had recourse to his unfailing sustainer, but conscience craved for a Mediator, a Sacrifice the blood of bulls and goats could not appease. It was then that a hint arose within his heart, that mayhap the Messiah was to minister grace and peace to the troubled consciences of Israel and by the offering of Himself. Pagan story had supplied many such examples, but while they failed, His may be the decisive success.

At the morning meal he spoke of his miserable experiences, and was surprised to learn that the wife of his patron had been similarly affected. She had felt that the world had just committed its crowning sin. Their meditations and anticipations were sombre and afflictive, nor could the customary routine banish their gloom; and to pass another such night filled them with disquietude. Paul's prayers were unavail-

ing ; he went to his couch unrefreshed and not anointed. He lay wakeful and uneasy, and counted the hours. When suddenly a sweet sense of Peace and assurance stole unto his soul. The hand of the eternal Father seemed resting on his shoulder ; and into his alert ear were whispered the blessed words, " Thou art My son, I have begotten thee to re-establish my chosen."

He arose from his couch and went out before the break of the day. The stars had just begun to put on a white veil and retire from the bridegroom's chamber. As he gazed eastward a pearly grey began to diffuse itself as from a hidden centre. And presently Seraph's wings, touched with rose, began to blush more and more, and then to don golden plumage with their crimson. The courtiers of the sun now began to doff their suits of dun and to apparel themselves in gorgeous suits of scarlet and gold. The bridegroom was beginning to show his golden crown, and anon his golden sceptre, and his flaming sword lay at his feet. A flight of vultures rose into the air, points of light touching their black wings. The whole desert began to wake into life, and a peculiar peace and joy kept this new dawn within his recently dark and haunted spirit. All the dread and apprehension had departed, the fate of his nation and the fortunes of the world seemed to be sealed for blessing.

Wondering how it was, he could never explain to others, and not completely to himself, but the emotion assured him that its origin was divine. His eyes glistened. Was his God drawing near, with a sheathed sword and an extended sceptre ?

He appeared at the morning meal, touched by the sunrise. He looked at the lady, and she, too, had

gathered gladness since the previous evening. But neither of them were disposed to blab, but to list to a quiet tune, as running waters—waters of life. And yet she was only a Greek, previously unacquainted with the true God. She spoke at length.

“This shall be a festal day, my children; the lessons are to be foregone for once and we shall make an excursion to that old ruined Temple to the Gods, on whose architecture we deciphered with difficulty the legend.”

They set out, a happy company, but their guide was sadly puzzled to find it. Those columns used to stand boldly out against the horizon and beside them a grove of palm trees.

“What had become of them? The Grove, however is discernible, we must make for it.”

As they approached they could see that something had happened, and a shepherd, who overheard their perplexed speculations, volunteered the information that, at the first rays of the sun, the columns fell prone upon the sand.

“They saw many a sacrifice,” said the shepherd, looking at them. “They seemed to stand like the mountains, while living men passed away. Now their time came and, like the generations, they are no more—and the bloody rites with them.”

Paul and his companions roamed over the ruins, and, looking for inscriptions, they deciphered, “Life for evermore.”

Paul was much struck by the shepherd’s narration and wondered at the meaning and connection between the two exalted states of feeling partaken of by his hostess and himself. “This,” he said, “is a sign that Pagandom is doomed and that Proselytism to Judaism

is about to enter upon a new era, under the Coming One."

The family made a happy pic-nic among the ruins : and upon the top of tumbled stones, they beheld, facing the West, a glorious sunset.

The time that Paul was to spend in Arabia was now rapidly expiring. Often and often he had asked himself, "What is to be my life's work? God has not made me in vain. He has designed me for a great enterprise. I feel the assurance within that I can, and desire to be, a restorer of the old paths, when Israel was great, and quailifying itself to become the Ruler and teacher of the nations. However unworthy and inadequate, let me be a humble instrument for gathering the nations into the same Covenant with Abraham."

"An Angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, "I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers : and I said, I will never break my Covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land : ye shall throw down their altars ; but ye have not obeyed my voice. Why have ye done this ?" (Judges ii., 1, 2.)

Paul was ready to extirpate the heretics—any and all that were propagating mischief against the most rigid adherence to the prescriptions of the Levitical economy, lest the Divine Author should dissolve His Covenant. But Paul read on.

"Wherefore, I also said, I will not drive them out from before you, but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. "What a penalty for disobedience !

“And it came to pass when the Angel of the Lord spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept.” (Judges ii. 3—4.)

Paul now wanted a place for repentance. Had he allowed no false gods to be saluted within his breast? Was the integrity of his worship never unbroken, to the sole and only God who could redeem him? He prayed that he might be assisted to cast out every false god that had been permitted to receive occasional homage within his soul, which was intended to be a holy land, and God's alone. Paul wanted a sacrifice, an adequate one. Until then he must remain in Bochim, the place of weeping. “And they sacrificed there unto the Lord.” (Judges ii. 5.) Paul wanted a better sacrifice, for the thorns remained.

Meantime, pending the solution of the great question for himself and his nation, he rejoiced to believe that the times predicted for the Messiah were imminent and that the glorious advent drew near. He had enquired of some of the travelling merchants what was going on from time to time, and he heard with exceeding interest that John had gained great influence, that multitudes flocked to his preaching, confessed their malpractices, and were enrolled in the new Guild of the Forerunners of the Messiah, for John had always taught his followers that when Messiah appeared they were to leave himself and follow the Greater One. “I must decrease and He must increase.”

But other reports reached Paul's ears. A false Messiah was bewitching the people, because of marvellous signs and wonders wrought by his hands. John did no miracle, but this false one, by the help of

Beelzebub had done wonderful things that none could explain or dispute. Miracles, that is to say, which conferred blessings, not upon isolated cases, of blindness, deafness, dumbness, paralysis, but, astonishing to say, even thousands of people—five thousand of men—not to say women and children, were fed by multiplying a few loaves and fishes, and the fragments filled twelve baskets. “The man who can feed the people when they are hungry, when by no fault of their own, either by bad harvests, or want of employment, or by plunderings of Banditi, or the ravages of an invading host, that is the man for us,” said the crowds, and they followed him.

“And he can talk, I can tell you,” said his informant. “Beautiful stories came from his lips, as though grace and truth anointed his tongue.”

“What is His teaching?” enquired Paul. “Is it to magnify the teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees? Does he exalt the Law and is He predicting that the Temple will never be overthrown, and the Romans and every other nation who wag their heads against Israel shall be made the footstool of the Messiah?”

“Oh! no!” replied the merchant. “There you are wrong. He is for ever denouncing the Scribes and Pharisees, exposing their traditions to ridicule, and condemning the immorality of their maxims. In fact he has predicted that the Temple will be utterly overthrown.”

“Oh! I have no patience with such idle tales. I must be excused from listening to such rubbish. Pray, don’t offend ears by repeating this nonsense. But what was His origin? Can you tell me?”

It is given out that he is of the lineage of David, but his father was naught but a carpenter, and

himself helped his father. They lived for years at Nazareth—an undistinguished village of Galilee.”

“What!” incredulously exclaimed Paul. “A carpenter! from Galilee—putting up to be the Messiah! I could almost laugh, if the subject were not too grave. You say that enormous crowds attend the steps of this ridiculous Impostor.”

The merchant interrupted him, laying his arm on Paul’s. “No Impostor!” he cried. “He may be *mad*—many say He is mad, but he is no Impostor. I will tell you a secret. Do you see this arm? This arm (and here he gave Paul a wrench). Look at it! *It was once withered.*” He became excited and shouted. “*I could do nothing with it,* but the Impostor you talk of made it *completely whole.* I was looking into a Synagogue and the Nazarene bid me stretch it out. I had faith to do it, and He made me whole. So it is all very well to decry that wonderful Son of the carpenter! He has done great things for the poor people, I am a poor man myself and I have been half starving when my arm was withered, but now!” Here the pedlar released Paul’s arm and turned his attention to a heavy bundle of stuff, which he strapped tightly and then swung from the ground to place upon his head. “I could not do that before,” he continued, “It was the Nazarene who enabled me.”

“I don’t dispute the facts,” persisted Paul. “Satan is ever ready to deceive the people by miracles, if nothing but miracles will suffice, Beelzebub! Beelzebub! That is just the sort of man, most dangerous to the State, beguiling the people by the arts and specious promises of the Demagogue. While decrying the ruling powers, civil and ecclesiastical, at the same time with a profusion of pious saws, making himself to

be a veritable Prophet. When I return to Jerusalem it shall be to put an end to the folly. Messiah is coming, and this is the time, but *not this one*, save the mark ! ”

A few days after came another caravan, and more news. Paul eagerly questioned the new-comers.

“ Oh, yes ! ” they replied. “ His career is ended ! The Impostor has done for Himself. He came riding into Jerusalem, if you please, upon a donkey, the foal of an ass, and the children attended him in swarms, crying ‘ Hosannah ! Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord.’ A regular royal entry, the streets strewn with leaves and flowers, and the people carpeted the way with their own garments. The Rulers desired to stop it, but they feared the people.”

“ *Fear'd the people !* ” echoed Paul with disgust. “ Well, go on ! ”

“ Oh ! he was betrayed by one of His disciples and crucified.”

“ Crucified ! ” again echoed Paul, but with a different tone.

“ It was a dark day in Jerusalem,” continued the narrator. “ We could not see for three hours and there was at the same time an earthquake, showing the anger of Jehovah. But He has risen from the dead ! ”

“ What ! Risen from the dead ? ”

“ Yes ! so at least the women say.”

“ Oh ! the women, silly creatures ! they will believe anything.”

CHAPTER X.

JERUSALEM AT THE EPOCH.

MEANTIME Jerusalem was enjoying a wonderful season of blessing. Nature composed itself into a charming mood. It had determined for the nonce to favour the land, the sea, and every bird, beast and fish, not neglecting the lords of creation.

Every morning the sun rose in a cloudless heaven, and conjured up some tender veils of silver thread, through which Sol smiled upon every worker and did not smite them with injurious ardour. People rose from their couches, inhaled sweet air, and felt the sun, with the hospitable warmth of the touch of the hand of a friend. "It is a joy," they said, "to live," and those who had gardens, and lambs, and orchards, spoke to each other of the happy prospects before them.

Winged things tucked away their stings, and only spread their small banners and their heraldic devices, proclaiming the wonderful pedigrees they possessed, for Eve chased one of their ancestors over the roses, and Adam let another rest upon his hand, as he gazed admiringly. And a beautiful hand it was, not three fingers cut off by barbarous labour, under a steam circular saw.

The pools of Jerusalem were in a condition of sweet content, for the Heavens showed forth God's praise, and the waters answered without a fault. There was the murmuring of pleasure, not of vexation, gentle chinklings as of silver money, small circles of tiny

waves intersecting one another, and, if a winged thing descended, the surface of the pool gave it an unctuous support, that it should not drown.

Men and maidens who went to the pools, looking down, found another happy face greeting it from beneath. "Peace to thee! All the families of the earth shall be blessed." That was the interpretation of the smile of each. In the markets, in the bazaars, in the working places, in the courts, the Synagogues, and in the Temple, there was prevalent an unwonted spirit of courtesy, urbanity and disinterestedness. The bonds of a human fellowship were strengthened, selfishness began to starve, and pride moped for want of attention. In business transactions an element of incongruity began to reveal itself.

"We are not ourselves this morning," they apologised, "we are wandering back to childhood, before the stern battle for existence begins. We want the guile of the serpent, we have families to support."

"But the Nazarenes have solved the problem."

"What Nazarenes?"

"The disciples of that Carpenter."

"Oh! friend, good-day! I am not wedded to folly."

The disturbing ripple subsided and on the whole surface of Jerusalem society there was a holy calm. Morning after morning, the sun came up with its toned salutation, sweet white and sweet black, and crowds in bright array lifting up their voices to speak well of the Nazarenes, for "day by day, attending constantly in the Temple with one accord, and breaking bread in private houses, they took their meals with great happiness and single-heartedness, praising God and being regarded with favour by all the people.

Also day by day the Lord added to their number of those whom He was saving." (Acts ii. 46—47. Weymouth.) It was the same with the farmers and merchants that came to buy and sell. They were not quite themselves. Honesty was getting to its own, although godliness, in the short run, was not so profitable.

Something had happened, something in the air. A new energy concentrated in one spot and radiating from it, like the wireless, spreading in wider circles from a point in Jerusalem. Was it to spread to the furthest confines of the Globe?

Meantime these halcyon days went on. Strange freight began to be brought in through all the Jerusalem gates.

"Slowly! slowly! Easy now! This way!"

In all the villages in the surrounding country, little groups were to be seen carrying something, or assisting feeble and halting people. What the deceitful face of dumb dwellings concealed, of human trouble and pain, began to make confession. Those houses might have tressilled vines, as if the soul of each grape was glad. But in this rejoicing period that we speak of, an open confession to the contrary was being made. Confession of utter weariness, hopelessness, suffering, behind the festooned walls.

The doors were being opened, the blind, the lame, the halt, the fevered, the palsied, the demonized, were being brought to the Apostles of the Nazarene. They came in. Yes! they came in—crowds attending them—watchful and expectant of miracle. Those Nazarenes came to the Temple; they did not neglect the customs in which they were reared. They did not tear off an old skin, before a new and better one

had not time to grow beneath ; they kept up the old Jewish practices, and prayed thrice a day—not forsaking the gathering ground of the nation. So the crowd was looking to the healers to pass up to the Temple.

All those happy days, the keepers at home, after they had seen the invalids lovingly tended and borne away in the morning, went singing about the house, where formerly were moans, because they *knew* that in the evening there would be Light. And that those who were carried in the morning would be ready to carry others next day, because the Apostles of the Nazarene were within hail.

Such crowds ! There was no room for the worshippers to get up to the doors. A lot of children, afflicted from their birth, and others injured by accidents, and again ignorantly treated by the tenderest of mothers, who put drops into eyes of infants by the recommendation of quacks, and blinded them. All were ranged, step above step. There was no hurry or impatience, for the thing had been going on for weeks, and the healers had never failed.

The invalids were placed as comfortably as props and cushions would allow, and the fathers and mothers and other relatives were standing at the heads of the beds. In the case of the children, they were given the first place, near the foot of the flight of steps where the Apostles always entered. And the mothers and other women had them in charge.

There was a taut expectancy as when a royal progress was to pass—a blessed silence before the glad event. When came Bumbledom ! Bumbledom came out with tipstaves. The Temple police had their duties to perform—“ What’s all this ? ” The mothers

calmly confident that the police were not brutes, smilingly answered that the Nazarenes are coming at the hour of prayer. A bandaged arm was uplifted from a bed, a contorted infant's brow was taking on new puckers, yellow suppurations oozing through the bandages.

"You must take them all away," said Bumbledom. "Be quick!" The glad mothers could not believe it. "It is the hour of prayer, I tell you, you must pack up and go." Then Bumbledom, discomfited by weeping women, retreated within to consult the priests, and get fresh orders. In the dark recesses the robe of a Chief Priest just flashed in the distance. Bumbledom came back triumphant. "Oh, yes! you'll have to pack up and go, I have got imperative orders from the priests." The priests took care not to go out and see for themselves, the claims of humanity might be infringing the privileges of an ecclesiastical system. So the feebly, wailing children had all to be picked up again, and swallowing bitter maledictions against Bumbledom and its superiors, the mothers had to undo all their careful preparations. It gave them great soul-trouble and all were gathered in a heap—the children crying and the women sobbing, when, as often comes, at the moment of bitterest disappointment, their mourning was turned into joy. For the expectant crowd of women and children were driven right into the approaching band of the Nazarenes. To see the smitten cherubs, suffering, many of them for the sins of their ancestors, was to put forth their miraculous powers at once.

Instantly the blind babe caught Peter's kind smile, it began to crow. A spotted infant became a lamb without scar or blemish. Limbs were straightened,

internal organs were bidden to do their duty, and the feeble-minded began to grow in intelligence and capacity. While the Apostles were mounting the steps the fevered threw off delirium and looked and spake their thanks to the Lord's Deliverers. The paralytic rolled up their beds and others were to be seen walking, and leaping and praising God. And this grand largess from disease was accompanied by largess to the captives of Satan's slavery. The Apostles, possessed in rich measures of the Holy Spirit's life-giving energies, manifested openly to all the people the great privileges that were now placed within their reach. Their words were winged with the Spirit's power; became mixed with faith in those who heard them, and then began the putting forth of the new powers and experiences proper to the gift of the Eternal Life, causing many to be added to the Church of those who were being saved. Those Apostolic assemblies were the destined germs which were to be developed into the vital organs of the Body of Christendom, which in turn was to be exalted by the Lord's Advent into the manifested Kingdom of God, administered by the election of the first Resurrection.

The humble company met in upper rooms and private houses, and their meals were most joyful. They ate them with great happiness and single-heartedness, praising God and being regarded with favour by all the people.

In the morning they were employed in errands of mercy, and the latest discoveries of the twentieth century for the alleviation of human suffering were superseded by the powers possessed by a few fishermen. They were walking sanatoriums, having endowments which dispensed them from seeking gold

or silver. And after freeing the diseased from the yoke of Satan, they freed them from the bondage of superstition and the yokes of sinful indulgences, by implanting within them the sanctifying energies of the Holy Spirit.

The Nazarenes, after the morning labours, came to veritable Love Feasts, all partaking of sufficiency—no luxuries—but healthy condiments, temperately enjoyed ; and for an appetising wine—a wine drawn from the inmost arcana of spiritual fervours, the joy, to wit, of the Lord's presence, who was pleased to dwell in each of their hearts and make His presence felt.

It can be easily understood that the meals were blessed. The new world's opening new chapters, though simple, were enthralling. It all depended upon the Church being kept pure. Every day somebody was bringing helpful gifts to the common stock. Bar-Nabas, Son of Consolation, or Encouragement, sold his farm in Cyprus and brought the money to the Apostles—the parent of a long series of benefactions and specious rivalries in ostentatious gifts, which has not ceased to poison Church finance ever since. Gifts of gold and silver are immeasurably lower than gifts of the spirit, chief of which is Truth. All looked so serene and fair, yet from the blue, two bolts descended, and terror, wholesome warning terror, came into every soul.

Ananias and Sapphira were stimulated to gain equal credit and estimation, and having voluntarily lied separately, were forced to lie together in one dishonoured grave.

It is, I suppose, on account of these two judicial acts that supremacy became attributed to the foremost fisherman among the Apostolate ; but St. Paul ad-

ministered judgment quite as frequently, and St. Peter's influence rapidly waned before the progress made in the Gentile world by the former.

Money, the root of all evil, and private property,—the Church at a later period, sought to deprive of its worst peculiarities, by reviving in the Monastic Orders Pentecostal example. It is characteristic of the history of reforms that the initiations often end by sinning against the very ideals that originally possessed them. And so, in our day, Spain is goaded to attack the wealthy corporations of Monks and Nuns, who use their exemptions from civil burdens to oppress their serfs and industrials. The same met in France with merited rebuke and banishment. In England, alone, the sweet tradition lingers with scarce a fault in its tone and constitution. The Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods in the Anglican Church bring their fortunes, inherited or acquired, and devote them to the common stock; living in Community, and ready to serve for body and soul, without hire and with continual sacrifices, which are richly rewarded by the love of God's poor, and the love of God Himself, Who was once rich, but became poor for our sakes.

Was the Pentecostal economy, then, nothing but a falling star? By no means. It still is a polar point by which labour legislation is steered. The masses enjoy in community parks, libraries, infirmaries, schools, refuges, parish churches and clergy, factory and food inspectors, breakfasts for destitute infants, and pensions for the aged, bands, museums and picture galleries. Almost everything is done for them and for body and soul, except protection from murderous competition and equally murderous quest and manufacture of the demanded developments of a blood-

stained civilization. An important demand from the industrial pundits of our exalted civilization comes from an Apostolic band of Christmas card caterers, who imperatively require copper bronze to bring out the manger, and with brazen faces they are willing to provide two draughts of milk per diem for their young people to check the progress of the poisoning to which they are subjected. But with the wonderful progress of co-operative production and trading, the municipal ownership and running of trams, of water, gas and by and by dairies, it is not to be despaired of that the British Empire may become a gigantic trading Trust. All private business bought up, and a wholesale massacre undertaken of wholly unnecessary and pernicious trades, methods and processes—a massacre, not of innocents, alas, but of heinously guilty persons who would cater for anything that brought money, whether the producers were slain, body and soul, or not. The British Empire, keeping the Pentecostal Star in view, will steer for a simpler life, and by consequence a vastly longer one. Feverish competition and the vain race for social distinction will bring sanity to aims and hankerings, and she will endeavour to uphold a “British standard” of truth and equity, which will never be made to founder. After the example of Venice and Spain, and Holland and Peru, she will have great possessions and go into the markets of the world with special products which no nation can equally well supply, and her trade mark, “Made in the British Empire,” will be a guarantee for unchallengeable excellence. As the Quakers got rich by superior integrity, so the “British Empire unlimited” will become stronger and richer by simple honesty. No Tariffs directed against her will tempt

her to adulterate her wares. Her cloth will never be weighted with clay, nor her silk, or wool or leather be otherwise than it is truly denominated. As the British gold sovereign is never questioned, neither will the products need tricks to make them pass muster. It will be enough to prove against an envious but scheming rival that the article was "made in the British Empire."

But it will be thought that to guard the rights and interests of the subject people is already in our enormous Empire a matter embarrassingly complicated; and to introduce further the monstrous addition of directing the whole production and distribution and exchange, Home and Foreign, would completely clog the wheels of the National Administration. Now, as against that view, I bring forward the example of the East India Co.—our Indian Empire once administered by a Private Company. The converse transformation of the British Government into a single Trading Company is valid for the possibility. The private Company kept fleets and armies and negotiated with Princes. Have we lost the commercial power we then possessed? Would our successful merchants be crippled by acting for the Empire and with the unlimited capital of the Empire at its back? It will be said that it would multiply infinitely occasions of friction in our international relationship. That could not well be if the international trading was mutually advantageous and always honest. And remember the innumerable cases which come before the Home Office and the Courts in connection with the competitive commerce of to-day—all that would fall to the ground—the resources, the machinery, the abilities

would be available for application to the larger matters of Imperial trading abroad. Our Colonies would not be slow to follow the Motherland. They have long been ripening in Canada and Australasia for more communistic experiments. They have not an Ancient Nobility to compensate like we, but no more than life interest need be preserved. The noble scions of the great houses may grandly decay in their splendid mansions, having left imperishable examples of chivalry, patriotism and abounding beneficence, but posterity did nothing for us and we need not consider it. A proud ancestry, if it was illustrated by noble deeds, would be a private possession that could never be alienated, and the British Empire can confer many titles to respect and admiration, according to merit, and found a new aristocracy with indefeasible rights to regard written upon the history of their times. The paths of true honour and distinction it is for every citizen to open for himself. But if much would be submerged, the submerged tenth would arise no more. No British citizen would be poor, and no injurious trade or process would be permitted. To doom a child to a lingering death for the sake of a colour or a fad, to expose precious lives to destruction because of the economic straits induced by competitive production, would not be possible in our Christian commonwealth. The wealth, the science, the strenuous labours, formerly devoted to the acquisition of wealth and the congenial destruction of trade rivals would be transferred to the redemption of operatives, while at necessary work, from every possible risk or disadvantage. And with good reason; for everyone, without exception, will have to do their stint, according to capacity, in the

National Service. Why should that be excepted to ? When the bloody trade of war is accounted honourable, and toll would be taken from every one capable of bearing arms.

When the Co-operative Trading Company of the British Empire is established under new management, the huge offence and waste involved in private advertising would be saved. I am aware that there can be no absolute "waste" while money is circulating (and those who talk of the "waste" of the Crimean and South African Wars talk nonsense: it is a question of comparative utilities what object it is proposed to serve by putting money into circulation, which is the prosperity of any existing generation). But the advertising of to-day is a gross affront and a shameless robbery of time and attention and an impudent invasion of pre-occupied moments wanted to be really worthily employed. The consolidation of all industries, trades and professions under single direction will effect a wonderful deliverance and change the face of commerce from the grimaces of a baboon to that of a benefactor and statesman.

What else ? Insurances will end. The agents who sneak out of the toils and perils of indispensable labour by inducing hard-working folk to take out policies for life, fire, burglary, burial and marine risks will be gently conducted to a seat, and then, after a rest, bid to get up and do something useful.

The citizens of the British Empire Corporation will not require to repose faith in any insurance company for the providing of some aid to their families when the bread-winner is removed. The British Empire will undertake all risks whatsoever—no destitute orphans or widows can be scheduled. The

premiums they will pay will be in service, from which there will be no escape. Similarly, if a fire occurs, all losses will fall upon the Empire, and anyone guilty of arson, through carelessness or malice, will become a public enemy and made to suffer. The immense shipping of the British Empire will not be insured at all, just as the largest fleets of the Private Steamship Companies of to-day find it economical to dispense with any insurance. No murder of infant lives when the British Empire is the only insurance office. No murder on the high seas when no contrived shipwrecks of over insured new vessels could offer an inducement. Crimes and follies innumerable would die, and have no resurrection, so long as the British Empire led its victorious life in community.

True! there would be a certain abridgment, to certain persons, of personal liberty. But what about the abridgment of liberty, through poverty (not to "certain persons," and, indeed, to hosts of idle women, but) to millions? The great majority of all communities are imprisoned by circumstances, whose daily round is bed and work, with poor meals between. They may sing maniacal songs about Britons never being slaves, but their aprons are scarcely ever off, or their pens on their ear. The British Empire will endow its free workers with reasonable leisure, and exact only what is due. No non-employment could exist.

And what leverage would be given to the British Empire, when organised into an industrial and commercial State, when negotiating with other States and Dominions, bargaining for their adherence to treaties on behalf of subject races—the Congo natives,

for example. Our Empire State, without threat of war, could refuse to treat for the export that the other State wanted, unless the provisions of the treaty to which we were parties were carried out. The rest of the world might jibe and scorn us, but we might surely for once in a way wage war without any interested selfish motive inspiring us. Wage war to avenge iniquity to shackle the power that dared to raid and massacre the adherents of a religion differing from its own, instead of through infidel policy dreading to offend the persecuting Power. It is sickening to remember how seldom our land and sea forces are employed for any disinterested object. We could have both avenged and prevented the massacres that the "Unspeakable Turk" was permitted to perpetrate, against Armenia and at Adana, on the plea of religious fealty. The innocent blood cries out against us, as it also cries from the Congo State. Have we lost altogether Faith in God? "Power belongs to God." He delegates it to nations for the execution of His will. Is it His will that the Christians of Armenia and Adana should be massacred every now and again at the caprices of a monstrous Fanaticism, and we become *particeps criminis* by not only being supine in the matter, but even strengthen the armaments of our ally? All this comes of want of faith in God. Heaven fated. Be sure our sin will find us out. We shall live to rue it, and we shall deserve it. Think you the Moslems can respect us when they show such base fear, and stroke the Beast whose chops are still dropping from the blood of Armenia and Adana. The maxims for national conduct are precisely the same as for private individuals. Every citizen

should do the right and shame the devil and fear no consequences. What need is there for the British Empire to court foreign alliances? It is only weakened by making any ally. Let it stand and abide in impregnable strength, so long as it intends always to do its national duty, in succouring the oppressed, crippling tyrants, and being ready *always* any time to punish by war any flagrant outrage upon helpless victims of Mohammedan rapine. If Britain will not do this, then let her be deposed. God will find another instrument. To think of a great Power like Britain shaking her knees and looking for a prop in an upstart mushroom state like Japan is enough to cover us with the deepest shame. Oh! for another Cromwell! Cannot this faithless generation be taught that by God Kings rule and Princes execute judgment. We have by our recent deeds shouted out that the above is a pack of nonsense—as well listen to old men's fables as regard the statements and warnings of the Holy Scriptures. But I ask again: Is the Turk to be bolstered up? and the bleached bones of God's saints in Asia Minor remain un-avenged?

Among the many changes we may look to see effected by the Democracy, two institutions are likely to remain. The Throne and the Church. The former is Divine, the shadow of the first Article in any Christian creed. The ultimate appeal in every well constituted Government, and safeguarded from violent and periodic changes by the hereditary principle. The second, the latter, is yet more unchallengeably Divine—the authorised Guardian of the deposit of Revealed Truth, and the organised organ for the continual propagation of the Gospel, heralded

by angels and entrusted to Apostles and their spiritual succession, for permanent fructification throughout the world by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself and His *alter ego*, the Spirit.

So long as these remain and they must remain, the world's lasting welfare is secured and increased. Apocalyptic prophecies are not taken up here—they are fulfilling themselves under our very eyes. For the present we hark back joyfully to the condition of things in Jerusalem immediately subsequent to the Great Bestowal.

Those were great days after Pentecost. The greatest chapter in the world's history. No such days ever preceded or succeeded them up to now. As in a great orchestral piece of music, the trumpets in massive unison give out the theme—with thrilling force and awe-struck depth—a theme which is afterwards caught up by inferior instruments, and a great strife commences with drum and cymbals to vex and alter it, new airs overlaying it, though they are impregnated by flitting echoes of the old, until the foundation theme gathers new strength to free itself and arises above all clamour to announce its Resurrection with irrepressible power.—Then shall the trumpets peal all over the world that theme which Pentecost began. The Alpha and the Omega. The end of the stormy past and the ushering in of the Shepherd's eternal strain.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CHURCH BEFORE TRIBULATION.

THE sweet calm of the Pentecostal season was to be rudely broken up by a storm of persecution. The success of the Apostolic preaching, which the Sanhedrim could not put down for fear of the people, was altering trade practices in a remarkable manner. Some of the fire which descended upon Apostolic heads appeared to have gone beyond to the dealers, and entered to their consciences—if a conscience could be found—and there, fragmentary, worm-like, pointed flames gnawed within. Inducing certain of them to rise up from their beds in the middle of the night and rummage out their weights and scales and reform them. The common people felt the difference, in both getting a proper price for their produce and the true returns of the weighing machines. Likewise they were excused all doctor's bills, and the maladies, which were confessedly incurable, became amenable to creative power, exerted on behalf of the formerly despairing. Moreover they became new men and women morally, better than they ever had been in all their lives.

So as the Nazarenes went to and fro in the streets of the Holy City, it began to answer more truly to its current cognomen, and men and women turned to look after them as they passed and lifted up their voices to bless them.

Little children, all blushes and tremors, would run up to the Apostles, to pull at their robes and remind

them of what they had done for them. And when a gracious Apostle would stoop down to catch the whispers of a trembling girl holding a skipping rope, he could make out her happy reminder, "I was a cripple and could not walk, and you cured me."

"My dear little damsel," the Apostle would reply, "you are mistaken; it was Jesus Christ who cured you, not I." She would stop for a moment, puzzled, and then skip away, looking back, with the sacred name on her lips.

At this period the Temple and Synagogue worship underwent a singular change. The great Courts were filled; and instead of formal and weary rites, that did not penetrate deeper than the clothes of those present, there were spontaneous chantings of the Psalms—groups dropping on their knees and identifying themselves with David's repentance and David's consecration. When the Prophets were read, they listened as if they had never heard it before. A great company of the priests became obedient to the faith. After the fruitful labours of the morning, the loving and rejoicing company of the faithful would come together for the Love Feast. This was the common midday meal, shared to all in proportion to their several needs. There does not seem to have been any attempt to solve the gigantic problem of securing that all should labour in due degree and be benefited in due proportion and according to desert. Rewards in the present Industrial Regime are given in inverse proportion to desert; and this contradiction which began with civilisation continues until now.

The infant Church was not called to begin where Reformation was least possible, or least urgent, but

it began to lay the new foundations of faith in the spiritual nature of man and his relations to God. That was its finest work. Its after consequences would lead on inevitably to the second and inferior issues of the spiritual Genesis. Meantime, and before the foredoomed failure of a communistic fellowship (at this immature period of the World's history), the theme of a true Christian socialism was given out by twelve trumpeters and their consorts with a power whose echoes have never died in all subsequent generations. The Church caught it up and echoed it in the Monastic Orders, but, as we have already indicated (in the simile elaborated in regard to the history of the Christian Church), the theme, failing to preserve its integrity, became lost in fearful strifes and confusions. Now it is recovering its truth and genuineness and is given an assured victory in the latter day.

At this juncture, the common meal was getting increasingly well attended, and almost daily a new face appeared from among the priests. The President of the feast would see with pleasure the face of one, high up in the Sacerdotal Order, and receiving him into the community, would ask him to make a confession of his altered attitude. Then would the Neophyte, as yet unendowed by the gifts of the Spirit, and not baptized into the *Name*, would simply avow that the blood of bulls and goats had never given his conscience peace, and he had perceived that the disciples of the Nazarene had undoubtedly secured that prize—that the crucified Nazarene was the Lamb, slain before the foundation of the world—the fulfiller of the Law—the great antitype of the Levitical Economy. And hence the Messiah, who has already begun to renovate the world. That, though He him-

self had not seen Him, twelve accredited witnesses of His Resurrection from the dead were appointed by the Lord Himself to proclaim the fact that they had seen Him ; ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead, and he believed their testimony, not alone on account of their characters and their consistent narrations, but from an inner conviction, born of heavenly and spiritual impulses that can neither be gainsaid, nor to the unbelieving explained. Hence he is ready for Baptism and humbly prays that the gifts and graces of the Spirit may be conferred upon him by Apostolic hands. That while it would not be possible to convince an unbeliever of the truth of the spiritual impulses that seal decision ; yet any one, the most hostile and incredulous, could not withstand the evidences afforded by the miracles, bruited abroad by hundreds. But further, he had an aged father who had lost his sight entirely : and one of the Nazarenes, simply by his touch, had given to this hapless student of the Law perfect sight for the smallest script. Who was he that he could withstand proofs like these ? “ I pray you receive me into your number, and as soon as may be, let the waters of Baptism confirm my faith.”

At the same holy table, after the meal had been partaken of, came the offerings of first fruits. These came in gold and silver—thanksgivings for the healing of bodily and spiritual maladies, and restitutions for fraud, or non-fulfilment of vows.

Where the persons could not be found, the restitution was brought to the common treasury. Those who could not pay, although they had been very guilty, the Church frankly forgave, because the Lord had already forgiven. But such were afflicted by

remorse and begged to be put upon serviceable, though forbidding tasks for the benefit of the Commonwealth. In this manner the economic difficulty was daily surmounted, for with the extension of discipleship, restitutions for *laches* in fair dealing, and voluntary benefactions, there was provided an adequate revenue for the time being.

And when one considers the thousands of years during which force and fraud have existed, it is clear that there are to-day economic reserves, capable under repentance of satisfying the requirements of an experiment in communal life on a commanding scale. For the Rockfellers, Carnegies, Vanderbilts, Morgans, Mackays, Beits and Rhodes, if they simultaneously had begun to unite in giving a great example to their own times in constituting a New Harmony, and infusing into it the Pentecostal Spirit, the venture would not fail on its economic side. They would receive dividends cashed in a higher sphere, and would have recommended to their associates in earlier periods of their careers the abjuring of commercial methods never forged in Paradise, and atonement by restitutions would keep the Lord's Table a continual Feast.

For with the extension of the preaching of the Kingdom and the flocking in of disciples, such vast sums would pour into the Treasury that time would be given to make the complex provisions requisite to reconstitute society on a fraternal basis, enabling nations to fraternise also, and thus commence to lay up warships for ever, retaining only the cruisers for pleasure tours over the World.

After the laying down of defrauded acquisitions, the next stage of the Commonwealth would be followed by the memorial feast of the Founder—the Lord's Supper

It was always hoped that He might appear visibly at each commemoration and inaugurate His Messianic rule, but in any case, He came to the hearts and consciences that loved and believed in Him. They fed upon Him by faith and love : And the consecrated elements, distributed in equal proportions to each, proclaimed the equal rights and privileges of the Brotherhood. In solemn silence and with heart-rending recollections of sins—transferred by faith upon the sin bearer, they ate and drank His remission of sins and the tokens of His eternal life—the indefeasible proofs of God's good-will to man. The Eternal One, having made bare His heart, and disclosed that it was an everlasting fire, which consumes every selfish consideration and glowing with unending force for the disposal of cold aversions and the dispensing of warm uniting cohesions, cementing humanity to God by the Incarnation and the Sacrifice of the Son of God.

Thus was the coming Messianic Kingdom being prepared ; and Jerusalem, like a charmed bird, escaped from the Isles of the Blessed, was daily preening its wings as for a further flight, when a man from Arabia appeared and dashed the lovely prospect to the ground.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CHURCH PLUNGED IN TRIBULATION.

AMONG the happy company of the believers in the Christ were seven men selected to relieve the Apostles of the routine business of making the daily ministration—a worrying, anxious and invidious task. One of them, however, acquitted himself so well, and with such acceptance, that a sunny complaisance shone in every feature of his countenance and people agreed that it did them good to look at him. The main reason of this was of course that he was full of grace and power, in addition to which he performed great marvels and signs among the people. Ever busy in good deeds, being both practical and theological, he was equally deft in dispatching quickly the business in hand, and also in meeting scorning and malicious antagonists, who sought to convict him of being a law breaker, and guilty of treason and blasphemy. Of those who distinguished themselves in this manner were certain members of a so-called Synagogue of Freedmen, together with some Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Cilicians and Asians. They roused themselves to encounter the deacon in debate, but were quite unable, however, to resist the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Deprived of the power to achieve a conquest, the discomfited disputants determined to vent their spleen upon the unassailable Nazarene. Four different races at least united to conspire against him, and envy and mortification worked so zealously that his previous popularity was

at length overthrown: and led by the Elders and the Scribes, the people seized him with violence and took him before the Sanhedrim. Up to that hour the accused deacon was running a career which was accompanied by encouragements and cheers from both the Church and the World when Stephen (for that was his name) appeared at the door of the Upper Room to partake of the Love Feast, and the couches being crowded, there was a general movement to give him honour. All greeted him with the utmost cordiality, for they were hearing continually how successfully he was defending their cause. Just before his seizure, however—his last appearance at a true Agapemone—his radiant face showed expressively an unusual perturbation; and when all looked enquiringly at him, he professed openly that one of the debaters—a young man from Arabia—displayed uncommon power, and pushed his arguments with a force and vehemence that, were his hidden wisdom equal to his natural gifts and attainments, he would have gained a victory. “But of course,” said Stephen, “I was able to show that his ground was untenable, and that his absence from the scene of the Messiah’s triumphs, during his sojourn in Arabia, was a fatal disqualification.”

This was the last supper of our Lord that Stephen commemorated, and the memory of it abode with the disciples as a treasured recall. None could fail to note that he was lifted up to unwonted levels of intimate converse with his Master. He presided after the Love Feast was over and the Supper began. His hands, presently to be so broken, then brake the bread and outpoured the wine with such fervoured thanksgiving that in Him they saw an intimate of His Lord.

Distributing the sacred emblems to each and all, the gathering, under the solemn stress, was silent—remembering Jesus. Only here and there inward emotion relieved itself by a deep drawn breath, or stricture in the throat—a release of tense muscular repression. “I foresee, dear brethren and sisters,” said he, “that our new and dear fellowship is decreed to pass under the chastening hand of our God. His love is always wise and good. Let us adore, if He comes to purify and purge, blessing the hand whose dreadful strokes mean our needed rescue and our better healing. The season of discipline makes us an example of suffering patience and better fitted to carry the cross that our Master ever exhorted us to do. He has set us an example which none of His true followers can decline to imitate. To die like Ananias and Sapphira (and at this reference a shudder passed through the assembly) was an admonition given for all after ages. May our uncomplaining endurance be likewise a heritage to subsequent generations, showing forth the completeness of our surrender, body, soul and spirit, all that we are and have, without pretence and without reservation of any part, to our Redeemer, Whose blessed life was the purchase of our own.”

“My beloved brethren and sisters, who I foresee are about to be exposed to the bitterest persecutions at the hands of the Authorities, determining to stamp out the Divine fire, which from Heaven descended at Pentecost; and is ever after to visit souls and renew them for the Kingdom—In order that you may be fortified to bear and endure what the World powers in these last days will impose to wear out the saints of the most High—I should count it a privilege if, by my own example, your hearts should be stayed and

strengthened under the fires of persecution. Be prepared for loss of property (much you have already surrendered). Be prepared for loss of health in wretched dungeons. Be prepared for loss of life, while the innocent children must be left to the charitable care of such members as are not yet accused and convicted. I have been a disciple for but a few months, and I should love to do more for the Master than I have attempted. It matters not. There is another Jerusalem on High. I doubt not I shall there be given to serve my Lord better and longer."

The assembled company were filled with painful apprehensions, and after a hymn had been sung, Stephen was surrounded by his beloved kin. His beautiful and benign countenance was irradiated by a light that was never seen on sea or land. It was remembered then, and it shone yet more transcendently for the last time—amid a howling storm, when high waves raged to engulf the Church and drove it upon the Rock of Ages.

When the time arrived for this Household of faith to separate, young and old accompanied Stephen to the portal for a fervent farewell, and one and another signed and whispered to each other, "Look at him." He had been known as a child for health and beauty, but now, to those physical attractions were given that Heavenly varnish which none can compound or communicate, but He only Who regenerates and sanctifies. Not unlikely his emphatic reference to Moses as an infant, which he was to make on the morrow, "a wonderfully beautiful child" (Weymouth) was suggested by the talk of the neighbours when he, as a child, was playing in the streets. Be that as it may, Stephen's face was Angelic then, and the family of the

saints hung upon his shoulders and some gave a " holy kiss." Then hasting away ; for he was always a busy man—minding his motto, " Time treads on the heels of Eternity"—he tore himself away, giving a last word. " Remember, we must meet again."

Ere he had reached the street, amid the confused noises that died in the upper air he paused to distinguish unaccustomed echoes. There was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. By one of those sudden transitions of feeling, common to Democracies, the people were assisting the Authorities to hail men and women to prison, of that sect they were erewhile lauding. Looking from Mount Moriah and to the great Tyropoean Valley, spanned by a bridge, there might be seen men, women and youths, being dragged to appear before the Sanhedrim, which was in permanent session, essaying to put down heresy and the threatened permanence of Jewish institutions.

The leading spirit in the futile enterprise was the young Rabbi from Arabia. He was here, there and everywhere, advising, commanding and originating the most efficacious methods to extinguish the upstart heresy.

Blinded to the evident innocence of his victims and refusing to listen to the testimonies to the wonderful signs and wonders, and not less wonderful teachings of the crucified, he precipitated himself against the treacherous insinuation that a crucified malefactor could be the fulfiller of all the Abrahamic promises. Stephen, as we have seen, had several encounters with Paul in debate, and the latter was determined to stop his dangerous influence. So adding terrors to persuasions he so wrought upon the Sanhedrim that full powers were granted to him to bring suspects before

it, and especially his antagonist who was so well primed in the past history of the Jewish people, that he seemed sometimes worsted before a crowd of eager listeners and sympathisers on both sides. Stephen could not stop to enquire that night what the wailings meant; could not imagine that already a virulent persecution had started. He was wanted at his distant abode, and after making his last dispositions for meeting the unexpected emergency, he took no opium drops, no mixtures of chloral, no Jewish or Pagan specifics to drop him into the arms of Morpheus, but after his vesper supplication and thanksgiving fell into the strong and tender arms of Him "Who giveth His beloved sleep."

That night Stephen was visited by the Angelic choir, the same choir which was not unknown to Paul, but which Paul had missed ever since he undertook to crush the new movement. Stephen knew what it portended, but on the occasion the ministration was on a much greater scale, and his heavy eyes, like his heart: oppressed by foreseen calamities for the Church, were opened by a shaft of light of excessive brilliance, accompanied by the sweetest harmonies that ever ravished mortal ears.

The vision and the voices flew upwards, whence they came. He knew the ominous, the questionable, the vanishing comfort. Like the impressive kiss of trembling relatives, given to a greatly beloved patient who is going to pass under the surgeon's knife in a critical operation. But sweet refreshing sleep supervened, and Stephen, fed and refitted by slumber, rose at his usual hour to commence his last day upon earth.

There were some widows of the Hellenistic Jews who thought that they were being neglected in the

daily ministration, and his first care that morning was to find them out and guarantee them due provision. He was out early. The radiant sun and the gay riot of the flowers twitched at his heart, while the old Pagan Pan was whispering "Be gay ! and put away your Psalms." He paused upon the threshold and felt its charm — for the sun was evidently determined not to blink whatever scene of sin and cruelty should be enacted that day. It was prepared to do the same in the gardens of Nero, in the streets of Paris, at Black Bartholomew, and again a whole brilliant summer during the Reign of Terror. As Stephen took in the scene, he was possessed by the strange feeling, often experienced before, that what he was then beholding was for the last time. He never, however, indulged in introspective speculations when duty demanded his active attention. So hastening his steps, he found he was marching to the sweet refrain that he had heard during the night, with which old chanting of the Psalms, words and music, made his breast like a nest of singing birds.

That fateful day began in the usual way, nature treading its accustomed round, but ere it had closed there were cries, moans, shrieks of women, loud crying of children, solemn protestations, firm avowal of discipleship, marchings and countermarchings, stalls in the markets overthrown, carpenters and masons suspending their clatter, officials in and out of Antonia, schoolmasters dragged from their pupils and various priests, actually priests, forsaking the altars, and secretly joining themselves to the company at Solomon's porch, where the Nazarenes held their rendezvous. But these occurrences were slight, in comparison with the two great birthdays which neither earth

nor Heaven shall ever forget. One was to be celebrated in Heaven, the other began its incipient stages within the disquieted breast of the Apostle of Christian Europe.

Stephen was down one narrow lane and up another. Active, strong, purposeful and feeling that God was with him. The widows were delighted with his visits, and wished him a long life.

“Since you came into office things have been quite different,” they said. “May you flourish like a cedar of Lebanon.”

He had scarcely emerged from a narrow alley when he stepped into the head of a disorderly crowd, marshalled by factious fanatics, who were inspired by the twin Incompatibles—God and Mammon. A number of malcontents, and they were increasing, beheld with undisguised apprehension that the spread of the sect of the Nazarenes meant a serious blow to the flourishing business that was done at Jerusalem, in connection with the sacrifices enjoined by Moses. The festivals, the sacrifices, the swarms of Pilgrims, made the centre of Judaism one of the most busy and profitable markets in the world. Traders listened with all their ears and were aghast at the rumours that, according to the new teachers, One Lamb only was required and that that One had already been offered up for the sins of the whole world.

“And what about turtle doves?” said another. “My living depends upon selling them.”

One could not refuse a sympathetic attention to homely appeals like those. For every changed custom, like every new invention, bears with cruel insistence upon every father of a family.

“And,” said the physicians, “*we* shall have nothing

to do ! The Apostles do cures for the asking and want no pay. Moreover their cures are splendid and we cannot deny it."

"If we were not, all of us, depending upon buying and selling"—began the traders again, and left the listeners to supply the remainder.

"And if the wise public were not accustomed to pin their faith upon our learned medical practice," broke in the physicians—and left the listeners also to supply the remainder.

"And," said a recanting Demagogue, "they are going to give the labourer—the slave—who produces all the wealth, an equal portion with the masters, who, of course, are entitled to take all the profits and hand them down to an idle progeny."

"That," said one, who was an agent of the High Priest, and was as skilful in rigging the market for sacrifices, as Cardinal Antonelli when Rome's corn grew in the States of the Church. "That," said he, "is what I call turning the world upside down."

All were agreed. "Let us go in a body to the Sanhedrim and have the plague stopped, once for all." They became cheerful again. To put an end to *Business*, which makes millionaires, and to put an end to the woes and maladies of mankind, whose attempted alleviations create the professional expert—In short to say "Evil thou shalt be my Good," was, in the idea of the disaffected, to prevent the World righting itself.

As they were consulting together, one of the malcontents in the crowd caught sight of Stephen, bringing his radiant face to the scowling crowd.

"Look ! here is one of them—a noted one—most popular man. Not only contends successfully with the priest party, but does wonderful cures as well.

Down with him ! Let us at once bring him before the Sanhedrim ”

So they delayed not. With cruel violence they dragged him along, and those behind reached their crooked sticks to have a dab at his face. They hated his “ smiling mug.” Nevertheless, when they dragged their victim before the court, and he faced the magistrates, despite their assaults, that countenance, serene and triumphant, constrained his enemies to unwilling admiration. “ They saw his face looking just like the face of an Angel.” Then they brought forward false witnesses, who declared that “ This fellow is incessantly speaking against the Holy Place and the Law. For we have heard him say that Jesus, the Nazarene, will pull this place down to the ground and will change the customs which Moses handed down to us.” (Weymouth.)

At once the eyes of all who were sitting in the Sanhedrim were fastened upon him, and they saw his face, as we have said, looking like that of an Angel.

Then the High Priest asked him, “ Are these statements true ? ”

Then began Stephen his masterly defence. He required no advocate to plead for him. There was an Advocate on High, who fed his spirit, fortified his mind, and kept it agile, informed and substantially accurate. Stephen seems to have been an Hellenist and preferred reading the Septuagint, hence unimportant variations from the Hebrew. The Alexandrian translation gave five more descendants of Jacob than the Septuagint recorded to have gone down to Egypt at Joseph’s invitation. What in the world does it matter so long as they did go more or less ? The superior young student might benignly

point out that such variations render the Scriptures non-authoritative—that the Jews may never have been in Egypt at all and consequently never came out of it. Stephen's speech quite unhistorical and the whole of the Acts not more trustworthy. But if there were only *five* living Jews who annually kept the Passover, the callous critic would find it difficult to explain the celebration.

Stephen's grand sketch of his national history was done in Michael Angelo fashion. Not with finical anatomical pencil, but with a burnt stick and sweeping lines as the figure of Moses dawned upon his imagination. Similarly Stephen dealt with blocks of marble—massive divisions of time-enduring Covenants, immovable foundations. The solidarity of mankind, the national destinies, irreversible judgments, to be resolved subsequently in God's eternal decrees of mercy and universal salvation. Meantime God is never in a hurry; though the event that marks the epoch is delayed by centuries, it looms with cometary certainty, while generations die, like the Hebrews did, "in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and Pilgrims on the earth, declaring that plainly they seek and desire a better country, that is Heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city."

Stephen, with his masterly strokes, outlined the head of the Hebrew race, listening to God's voice, which is music, and the overture commenced. "Leave your country, and your relatives, and come into whatever land I point out to you." The entrancing strains

of the overture caught the attention even of the mob ; for the story was the marrow of the bones of the chosen people.

Another great strophe. " He gave him no inheritance in it. No ! not a single square yard of ground ; and yet He promised to bestow the land as a permanent possession on him and his posterity after him, and promised this at a time when Abraham was childless.

Then Stephen, with Michael Angelo's pencil, went on with his great downward stroke. " And God declared (Calvin's God, who makes the Duck and the Duke, and gives to the one the village pool and to the other a great estate). God declared that Abraham's posterity should for four hundred years make their home in a country not their own, and be reduced to slavery and be oppressed." Now a strong upward stroke. " And the nation, which ever it is, that enslaves them, I will judge, said God, and afterwards they shall come out, and they shall worship Me in this place."

Within these great outlines, Stephen then began to fill in details. The patriarchs, Joseph, Pharaoh, and he who knew not Joseph, Moses—a wonderfully beautiful child, devoted to destruction, but adopted by Pharaoh's daughter, living in luxury for forty years, and then beginning to look into the conditions of his enslaved kindred, while the seemingly dull ears of Jehovah could not be pleased by their groans or their cries for justice. How another block of time intervenes to delay the redemption of God's chosen, while Moses loses forty years in Midian. Slow and majestic being the steps of the Deliverer, though He is always on the way towards the assured end.

Stephen then made the people see the burning bush and heard God's Angel say, "I am the God of your forefathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob."

Quaking with fear, Moses did not dare gaze :

"Take off your shoes," said the Lord, "for the spot on which you are standing is holy ground. I have seen, yes ! I have seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their groans, and I have come down to deliver them. And now I will send you to Egypt."

It was an old man, 80 years of age, whose possibilities for a great career in Egypt were foregone, whom God summoned to a career—the greatest but one that was ever accomplished in the history of mankind.

The proud land of his infancy, which witnessed his youthful supremacy, he shook to its social foundations, merely by a wand, and he brought out his enslaved kindred to the land promised to their great Ancestor. But the Overruling Power, with sovereign contempt for rushing predictions into speedy fulfillments, made the chosen people dwell and wander in the desert for 40 years—a fine interval for separation from the world, and opportunity for the giving of the law, and the worship of Jehovah, and the practical proofs of God's shepherding, when the manna daily fed His flock. It was to Moses that the angel spoke on Mount Sinai, giving to Stephen's forefathers those ever living utterances to hand on to them.

This is the Moses who said to the descendants of Israel :

"God will raise up a Prophet for you, from among your brethren, just as He raised me up." (Deuteronomy xviii. 15—18.).

Stephen's argument was that just as when faithful Moses, beholding an Egyptian wrongfully dealing with an Israelite, and inflicting a divinely authorised stroke of judgment upon the oppressor, could not get the people to recognise that he was appointed to become their Deliverer ; and also refused, a second time, to allow Moses to interfere—So the very people who most wanted his aid, despised and rejected his overtures. And what they had begun to do in Egypt they had been doing ever since.

When delivered from Egypt they would not submit to Moses, but spurned his authority, and in their hearts turned back to Egypt. They made a golden calf and offered a sacrifice to it, and kept rejoicing in the gods which their own hands had made. So God turned from them and gave them up to the worship of the Host of Heaven, and bade Amos tell them, "I will remove you beyond Babylon" (Amos v. 25—27).

The people who sucked in the flattering tale of Jehovah's adoption, covenant and promises ; and the romantic episodes of Israel's captivity and deliverance through Moses, were patient and pleased. But a darkening cloud fell upon the eager listeners when faithful Stephen was required to go on with his narrative, and expose the deplorable departures that Israel had made, and which entailed their exile to Babylon.

They began to be restive and the Sanhedrim itself began to be disturbed.

But still more to aggravate them, Stephen turned to the other gravamen of the charge against him. He had been preaching that Moses had been rejected, and exhorting them not to commit the same error in

rejecting the Lord Jesus, who is the prophet whom Moses declared should follow him and whom they should acclaim and joyfully receive.

But the Lord Jesus had made it clear that devotion to the Temple and the Temple services were obscuring the popular apprehensions of that God Who is a Spirit, and requires that men should worship Him in spirit and in truth. Moreover He had predicted that the splendid edifice would be overthrown.

So there was truth in the allegations made. "We have heard him say that Jesus, the Nazarene, will pull this place down to the ground and will change the customs which Moses handed down to us." Hence Stephen proceeded to justify himself, and said in effect, "Don't you know that this great Temple was not exactly the same as the Tabernacle in the desert, which was originally framed after an exact model given to Moses to copy." That Tent of the testimony in the desert was built as He Who spoke to Moses had instructed him. It was bequeathed to the next generation. Under Joshua they brought it with them, when they were taking possession of the land of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before them. So it continued till David's time.

Now David did not receive any command to build a Temple. The sacred and venerable Tent, where God manifested Himself habitually, assuredly answered all the purposes required. It was only a human scheme—innocent, if not laudable, but not obligatory.

"David asked leave," said Stephen, "to provide a dwelling-place for the God of Jacob," but he was not allowed. It was Solomon who built a house—not in obedience to a Divine command, but by per-

mission, as a favour to David. "For the Most High does not dwell in buildings erected by men's hands ; but as the Prophet declares.

"The sky is my throne,

"And earth is the footstool for My feet.

"What kind of house will you build for Me, says the Lord.

"Or, what resting-place shall I have ?

"Did not My hand form this Universe ?

(Isaiah lxvi. 1, 2, R.V.)

It was at this point, evidently, that Stephen's address was broken into. The gathering frowns deepened into rage and hatred. Stephen would have gone on to draw the inevitable conclusion that the Temple was really unnecessary for religious purposes ; although serving excellently by its festivals to give national cohesion to the tribes.

"No temple ! the idea ! the monstrous innovation ! No market gains " ! "Now the thief is showing himself in his true colours." The vendor of lambs looked at the vendor of turtle doves and they ground their teeth in sympathy. The doctor and the apothecary naturally enough, dreading the loss of their practice, would like to pound him in a pestle and mortar. No doubt, the man from Arabia was also among them, raising not trade or professional objections, but the danger to the whole family of nations, were the heirs of Abraham, through disobedience, to forfeit the Covenanted blessing entrusted to them for the world.

Cries and muttered curses arose among the assemblage, presaging his own immediate doom. And Stephen cried out. "O, stiff-necked men, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you also are continually at strife with the Holy Spirit, just as your forefathers

were. Which of the Prophets did not your forefathers persecute ? Yes ! they killed those who announced beforehand the advent of the Righteous One, Whose betrayers and murderers you have now become, you who received the Law given through Angels and yet have not obeyed it."

As they listened to these words, they became infuriated and gnashed their teeth at him. But full of the Holy Spirit and looking up to Heaven, Stephen saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at God's right hand, and said, "Behold, I see the Heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord and dragged him out of the city.

The whole proceedings, from the moment when Stephen undertook to challenge the essential pre-eminence of the Temple, became a riot of mob law. The murder which Plebs was meditating had, however, the consent of Paul, who was ready to aid and abet the criminals in spite of Roman Law, which reserved the right of capital punishment to itself.

No doubt the future Apostle stimulated the passions already aroused, and many would come to him for direction and encouragement.

It was the privilege of the first witness to a conviction for blasphemy to be given the honour of hurling the first stone : or, in a more deliberate execution of the sentence, a tall platform was erected, upon the top of which the malefactor was placed, and the first witness was to throw him headlong upon the rocks below. If the injuries were seen not to be fatal, the second witness was provided with a heavy stone to dash down upon the chest of the criminal.

If life still remained (for Rabbinical law was generally inspired by mercy) the encircling crowd was permitted, any or every one, to finish the miserable work by a shower of stones from all directions.

Amid the irregular tumult, we can suppose that many picked up heavy stones as they dragged their victim along, and numbers of zealous youths would gather round Paul, competing with each other to give the *premier coup*. "I was close by him, I am a first witness, and heard him speak the words." Another would impatiently shove this one aside, and swear that he himself was much nearer than anyone. A third would come forward to claim to be second witness anyhow.

The beautiful countenance of Stephen, irradiated by Heaven's light, and flushed with youthful vigour, and from childhood practiced in temperance and virtue, doubtless would draw from Paul the remark, or the reflection, "You will all have a chance; for it will take some time to batter life out of a man like that." It was easy to find a quarry at hand. Herod was a great builder and the cities of the Empire were increasing. "Let us drag him up to this ledge and cast him down"! No sooner said than done, but the youth, nursing his heavy stone, in his eagerness, missed his footing, just at the top, and fell the full height to the bottom, his blood and brains bespattering the rocks.

"He's done for," is the ejaculation of the crowd. "Did any one know him?" No one!—only a man.

"Well, now to our duty. The Most High has summoned us." The amateur executioners threw off their outer garments, to wield their arms with freedom, and they cast them at the feet of their leader, Paul.

They raised Stephen in their arms and flung him over, a great shout of triumph rising up from the pious multitude.

It was a lovely day, and, mingled with the songs of robins, blackbirds and thrushes, there arose execrations, maledictions and gratulations. Such clouds as were in the Heavens sat swan-like upon a sea of blue: motionless, and with such smooth preened pinions that they were images of peace and repose.

But the executioners were clambering down as fast as they could to the prostrate figure whose limbs stirred. And the second witness was struggling through to cast his stone. The crowd, however, could not restrain its bloodthirstiness, and a shower of stones fell, so badly aimed that more spectators were injured than the victim. Those that bent over him heard him say continually, "Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit." The second witness, seeing Stephen struggling to his knees and beholding that beautiful countenance gashed by wounds and soil, threw his stone away and rapidly retired behind. While the Martyr, summoning strength for a final effort and erectly kneeling, cried with a loud voice:

"Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." And when he had said this, he fell asleep. "And Paul fully approved of his murder."

CHAPTER XIII.

PAUL'S CONVERSION.

PAUL's conscience was in no wise shocked by the murder of the Protomartyr.

As when the sun bursts forth in strength and obliterates the delicate diversities of colour which a cloud reveals, even so the natural susceptibility of Paul's conscience was at this time dulled, blunted and blinded by a consuming fire of zeal which he mistook for the love of God and the highest interests of humanity.

To calm his uneasiness he kept repeating to himself his creed. The Jews were the people to redeem the world. Every corruption of the Faith, any departure from the customs laid down by Moses, was imperilling the future fortunes of mankind. One martyr, or a hundred, nay, a thousand, was not to be counted as compared with the magnitude of the interests at stake; hence, not a touch of remorse disturbed his perception of duty, although he was fain to deplore the complete absence of his sweet voices, which ever and anon caressed his peaceful slumbers.

After unrefreshing nights, haunted by Stephen's reproachful looks, he would earnestly pray, but his prayers got no higher than the ceiling. And the olden warmth that used to lie about his heart, like a nestling dove sent from Heaven to be cherished—that, too, had left him, leaving him cold, irresolute and unbefriended.

Ah, Paul! Paul! What seed sowing for after remorse you are busily intent upon. Why did you, when you caught a glimpse of Gamaliel, turn down a blind alley to escape him, muttering to himself, "He's too mild." How is it you were not smitten by shame and abhorrence when the loud lamentation made by devout men carrying Stephen to the burial struck your ear? and that you only perceived with anger and vexation that the number of the followers of the heretical sect did not diminish but seemed to increase. The more need for more zeal. Therefore he hastened to the Temple, flung himself down for stronger consolations, and fortifying succours. All was unavailing. The snows of Lebanon, not the warmth of Hermon, gathered in his vacant breast. His resolution to continue to persecute was unshaken. He was cool and hard as the Temple pavement. But again inquietude. He never had such questionable assurance of duty in all his life before. "Am I on the wrong tack after all?" he questioned. It was only for a moment. The Sanhedrin, his venerable Fathers, Gamaliel among them, had consented to give him letters even to the Synagogues of Damascus. They have *all* consented. I am fortified by these learned Doctors. I am justified by the success by which my persecution has been attended. The pestiferous sect are being scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts xxvi. 9), but he reflected, "Unhappily the Apostles remain."

Pacing the pavement in his soliloquy, he muttered his reflections. "Somehow the Sanhedrim cannot be

prevailed upon to touch *them*, at all events for the present.

"I never met any of them and never saw any of their wonderful cures, nor those of the Malefactor, on account of my absence in Arabia. It is just as well. I might have been seduced. If the Pretender now had worked a miracle in my own person, it would have been rather confounding, but happily he is gone off the scene. He and I shall never meet. Now to duty. I shall do what I can and the best I can." So Paul made havoc of the Church, entering into every house and haling men and women, committed them to prison—with a consequence that Paul neither desired nor anticipated. "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word."

Philip, at all events, one of the Deacons, was able to convince the Samaritans by the miracles he worked. In the proclamation of the Gospel and the acceptance of it, there was from the commencement the strictest alliance between miracle working and the making of disciples. "With a loud cry foul spirits came out of many possessed by them, and many paralytics and lame persons were restored to health. And there was great joy in that city." It was inevitable that the arch enemy of Christ should empower his slaves to become magicians and thaumaturgists. One Simon was such and made a great sensation. Philip's preaching and signs and wonders eclipsed Simon's altogether; hence he feigned faith and was baptised, being full of amazement at such signs and such great miracles performed.

Some of these tidings must have reached his

ears ; nevertheless, Paul pursued his fatuous course, imagining to scatter the disciples of " The Way " that might be found at Damascus.

An uneasy conscience made him restless and the dying face of Stephen would haunt him. And the comparative failure in Palestine induced him to seek better success in Syria. So " Paul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the High Priest and desired of him letters to Damascus to the Synagogues, that if he found any of that way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem " (Acts ix. 1, 2).

He had already " beaten in every synagogue them that believed on the Lord " (Acts xxii. 19), and " Many of the saints did he shut up in prison, having received authority from the Chief Priests, and when they were put to death, gave his voice against them " (Acts xxvi. 10). " And punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme ; and being exceedingly mad against them, persecuted them even unto strange cities " (Acts xxvi. 11).

What an outset for a career ! His first important self-appointment was to seek powers to become a public informer, and to imbrue his hands in innocent blood, the best men and women whose faith was boldly avowed and saints who sought to add to their own number.

How could a man, sincerely pious, so mistake his voices as to imagine that such work in which he plunged up to the elbows could be pleasing to the God of Israel. The God who put up with the vain imaginations of the Heathen for hundreds of generations,

and who suffered the provocations of His chosen, who had been given light, direction and leadership, in the wilderness and afterwards, and yet did not forswear His gracious purposes, and was so slow to punish, so long-suffering towards all, though they so deeply offended His purity, His justice and His mercy. Here was Paul, worse than the heathen ; for *they* had the grace to imitate *their* gods, flying in the face of Israel's God, who declared Himself as " The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin, but that will by no means clear the guilty.

Paul was to know the severity as well as the mercy of that God, when he was stoned as Stephen was, and it was by that mercy that his apparently lifeless body at Lystra arose miraculously and marched unaided back to the city which imagined him dead.

The God of Israel and the Father of Jesus, the same in all ages, never authorized or exemplified the religious persecutor. He was ever as impartial as an Imperial Cæsar—in the matter of Cults. It is when the Cults become cruel, as in Baal worship, when the natural light imparted to every human creature is darkened and denied, then does the Father in Heaven act as the Avenger of manifest transgression, and vindicates justice, love and innocent joy.

It has ever been a cheap charge against the religion of Jesus that the world has been deluged by innocent blood in the cause of religion, when, as a matter of the clearest historical fact and content of Divine revelation, that all the religious wars that were ever unjustly waged were occasioned, not by the aggressors possessing a certain religious faith, but because they possessed

no religious faith at all. The God of Israel drove the Canaanites out of their land, not because of their idol Cult, but on account of their abominations. And when Papal Rome invented the Spanish Inquisition, and used Alva to incarnadine the levels of Holland and the heights of Savoy and Lombardy and quenched Bohemian Protestantism in blood, it was not because the aggressors were filled with the spirit of the Christian faith, but because the Roman Catholic faith in these instances had no religion in it. Those so-called "religious" wars were simply heathen abominations, on the side of the aggressors, while the aggrieved, acting on the defensive, were Christian martyrs. Cromwell was a Christian Martyr in Ireland, acting for the aggrieved, in legitimate defence against wanton murder.

Islamism, having the sword in its creed and using it for conversion, is not properly a religion at all, for religion, in its elemental foundations, is love to God and love to man. None of the religious wars of Islam have any apology in plea of faith, and as they have never been defensive, but all aggressive (for the expulsion of the Moors from Spain was simply repelling invaders) Islam, with its conquering sword, will lawfully and speedily have to meet the Christian sword in pure defence.

So it is idle to take up the Atheist's brief, and argue from his false premises. The magistrate is invested with a sword, and woe be to him if he does not use it. Let it be admitted that legislative enactments for the abridgment of religious freedom in favour of a national religion is equivalent to wielding the sword; all the Christian powers are slowly endeavouring to solve the difficult problem—how to give perfect religious free-

dom, without compromising the safety and welfare of their respective kingdoms. To tolerate Roman Catholicism, whose essence is intolerance. To tolerate Islam, *e.g.*, in India and Egypt, whose essential principle is conversion by the sword. These are questions demanding the highest statesmanship. It may be soon necessary for religion, incapable of possessing a sword, to borrow that of the magistrate : for in truth man ecclesiastically, and man civilly has to be defended in both positions.

But while we are discussing, Paul is marshalling his entourage. An Inquisitor General ! bound upon the sorriest errand that a young man with, what ought to be the generous sympathies of youth, the least congenial task he could have undertaken. He is bound to inflict suffering and death, and the extent of that misery will be the measure of his gratification in the result. Days, weeks and months have brought mourning, lamentation and woe to the sect in Jerusalem since he returned from Arabia. And now as he mounts a horse, or a camel, or walks, the same scowling brow marks his facial signature. He leaves the city, and the cries that tremble in the air are due to the fulfilment of his agents. His attention is now given to the sumpter mule.

“ “ How many thrumb-screws ? How many scourges ? ” he enquires.

“ The Rabbis, sir, have given the manufacturers the merciful prescriptions.”

“ Humph ” ! says Paul, “ Gamaliel again.”

The distance is some hundred-and-forty miles and the slow ascent to the spurs of Lebanon makes Paul impatient to commence his bloody work, but he is relieved next day to see the white houses and Govern-

ment buildings gleaming through dark, embossoming groves of trees which came from climates varying from the tropics to Arctic snows.

The noon-day sun was brilliant enough and hot enough. The cavalcade paced along and the attendants and officials could not start a roundelay for the life of them. No one had any real joy in the job. The muleteer got engaged to go to Damascus, to see his sister, who was one of the "Way," and he means to protect her. *He* is the only man with a smile on his face. Even the five Roman soldiers, who were his escort, had no stomach for the business. To bind and scourge and imprison, tender and pious women and hear them invoking the aid of their Lord while they sink under the lash, or meekly offer their necks to the sword. What sort of man is at the head of this expedition? Yes! the sentiment in their breasts gave vocal utterance in the enquiry. "What sort is this Governor?" they whispered it to each other. Oh! glancing furtively at him, while Paul was busily hunting up his warrants, they answered to themselves, "He is not a man at all, he has no bowels."

Meantime, solid Damascus began to quaver in the heat. Tinkling rills dance daintily among ambrosial banks and gaudy flies flit and pause upon the open roses. The lovely old city was getting young again, under the abounding sunshine.

You do right, Damascus! to put on your bridal attire, for your name is about to be wedded to all but the greatest of the sons of men. The cities of Greece contended for the birthplace of a Poet, but in thee was to take place the new birth of the greatest Apostle of the Lord. In thee the greatest epoch, after Bethlehem, in the old world's history was destined

to take place. All things were ready. The Roman Empire was settled and bounding on in prosperity. Grecian thought and Grecian phrase had supplied the world with a language which could express the mysteries of the Gospel. Roman Law had given protection to the mysterious predictions of the Hebrew prophets, and was ready to shield any victim of malicious persecution, who commended and ever rendered obedience to Cæsar. Roman roads went on marching to the furthest Imperial confines. Banditti and piracy were being suppressed. The posts were carried with unwonted safety and masters and slaves alike were free to adopt any Cult which did not prejudice the strength and harmony of the existing order.

Nothing was wanting but the Apostle to the Gentiles.

The cavalcade was approaching nearer to that city which bordered the desert and made it blossom like the rose. Damascus joined East to West; it was the golden clasp which kept the girdle of two ancient civilisations. It was fitting that the birth-place of Gentile Christianity should take place there.

What was that? The cavalcade was tumbled upon the ground and Paul's horse was careering over the plain. He was violently thrown and rolled upon his back; his warrants scattered in the dust. A door of Heaven had been opened, and while his natural vision perished, under excess of light, Spiritual eyes were given him which for the first time penetrated into the Eternal World and there he beheld the Messiah in His glory. The anticipation of that glory which made Peter babble under the

intoxication of that dream, now fully blazed in its perfection upon the fallen Paul. That sight—that wondrous compelling sight—was the future theme of all his preaching ; and the single fact and fulcrum by which mighty Christendom arose and rested immovably for ever.

From the excellent glory came a voice, speaking in the Hebrew tongue. "Saul ! Saul ! why persecutest thou Me : it is hard for thee to kick against the goad." The awe-struck persecutor replied : "Who art Thou, Lord ?" And He said : "I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest. But rise and stand upon thy feet ; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of the things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee. Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee. To open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts xxvi. 13—18).

Oh, what wondrous Love ! instead of Judgment. And the complete identification of the Lord Jesus with His people. "Why persecutest thou Me ?"

"And when I could not see for the glory of that Light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came unto Damascus" (Acts xxii. 11). Thus St. Paul to King Agrippa in one of his frequent narrations of his Conversion.

We return to further details.

As Daniel, on the banks of the Tigris, heard alone the voice and the vision (Daniel x. 7), but a great

quaking fell upon the men with him—so was it with Paul's escort: 'they were dumb with amazement, hearing a sound, but seeing no one. Then he rose from the ground; but when with opened eyes, he strove to see, he could not. So they led him by the arm, and brought him to Damascus.

There was something on his other arm, which his guides and attendants could not see. In the arcana of Heaven's workshops a basket had been framed to equip the Imperial Seed Sower, carrying precious seed. The Heavenly Host, ere the door was shut, dropped this basket upon his arm, and admiringly beheld "A sower going forth to sow."

Many years afterwards, Paul was pawing the waves, spending a day and a night in the deep. He had planted many churches and written several Epistles, and earnestly desired to visit Rome and also Spain. "Is he to drown?" No! It was the Heavenly Seed Basket that supported him. It was his Life Belt. "I charge ye winds and waves that ye hurt not my Beloved Messenger!" The winds and waves heard. Presently, in the offing, appeared a Cypriote fishing smack, and the beloved one was pulled in by his best arm—the strong arm—that bare the basket. To return.

They brought him to Damascus. "And for three days he remained without sight, and did not eat or drink anything" (Acts ix. 9).

Leaving Paul to his meditations, we may profitably consider the example he has given us of fasting as a preparation for seed sowing.

The modern Protestant Christian has completely ignored the example of the early Church, and the implied sanction of Our Lord in the matter of abstinence. The earliest disciples, when seeking direction

from above, prepared themselves by fasting in conjunction with prayer. The modern Christian may be a gross feeder, who plants his banknote at a charity dinner, and finds a difficulty in discovering the *menu*, which he saw a moment ago, because of the orbital prominence of his abdomen. Though a Baptist he takes no heed of that John who dieted himself on locusts and wild honey. Now there *is*, notwithstanding, an intimate connection between the successful sowing of Gospel Seed and the visions, revelations and spiritual guidance vouchsafed to the fasters rather than to the feeders.

It was when the Prophets and Teachers of the Infant Church at Antioch, "ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts xiii. 1—3).

Fasting and prayer are commonly united in the Scriptures and commended for individual or assembled worship. Our Lord fasted for 40 days, as a preparation for His public ministry. He said that certain Demonic possession necessitated fasting with prayer, before the demon could be exorcised. Anna the prophetess served God with fasting and prayers, and our Lord said that those who fasted secretly would be rewarded openly.

Common-sense and medical science alike approve of fasting in due degree, since the error of intemperance in eating is scarcely less injurious than the same in drinking. That the soul is made more attent, perceptive, and receptive during fasting than in feeding will scarcely be doubted (although

moderate feeding also stimulates the faculties ; hence our Lord introduced His parables at meal times).

St. Paul recommended the Church at Corinth to give itself to fasting and prayer, and the reason why the disciples of our Lord were absolved from the salutary practice was explained by the Lord Himself. The Bridegroom was with them, and constant attendance upon Him, and hearing Him, brought them nearer than fasting and prayer.

If the modern Protestant Christian mourns the lukewarmness of the Church and the low flame of love and loyalty within his own breast, let him fast hard and pray hard. Then, not only will his health be promoted, but he will also have clearer views of his duty to God and man and perchance be given visions and vocies which the gross walls of flesh cannot penetrate.

Wisely did St. Paul abstain from eating and drinking during those days : waiting what the Lord would further say to him in darkness and solitude. What an awful period after his debauch of madness and cruelty against "the salt of the earth." Running in remembrance over his recent career—one which could never be undone or repaired—with what keen remorse must his soul have been afflicted. All the tragic scenes—wives, mothers, bread-winners dragged from their homes, the judges hearing his inflamed harangues against them, brow-beating the witnesses, who would seek to extenuate the guilt of discipleship, to God manifest in the flesh. Denouncing those witnesses as nearly as guilty as themselves, and then the witnesses openly confessing that they *are* equally guilty and equally ready to suffer. Paul,

seized with passion, getting them roped in for condemnation, and giving his vote against them. This, then, forsooth, was the issue of the heavenly choir—that like the lark would sing at Heaven's gate, and in his ears at night, but anon would spread its wings and hie away. These dumb premonitions of a great career by which the whole world would be affected.

And he had begun it by imbruing his hands in innocent blood and making for himself a name at which the world of Jerusalem grew pale.

But amidst his wretched contemplations, he was sustained by the wondrous and gracious intervention, not in the way of just retribution, but in the way of mercy, acceptance and adoption—not merely adoption, but signal favour and appointment to Apostleship. What deeps of unfathomable love, manifested by Him Whom he had been persecuting, for Jesus identifies Himself with all His followers. In one flash a new Paul had been created. Old things passed away and all things had become new. He had seen and believed. He had seen the Lord, with his blinded eye-balls, but his new spiritual eyes were nevermore to be dimmed. His qualification for the Apostleship was henceforth indefeasible. Not only had he seen, but heard, though, according to the economy of miracle and special revelations, further abnormal communications of the Divine will were to be confined to human agency.

To the great honour of men, to men the transformation of the world is committed. As a human father stands aside and refuses to lend a hand, when his son is struggling with his task, because left to himself, he will discover his shortcomings, and by his efforts then be rewarded—so does the Chief Ruler of all the

Apostles. "What shall I do?" cried Paul, and wanted a full reply from the Lord Himself, but the reply was, "Rise and go to the City, and you will be told what you are to do" (Acts ix. 6, 7).

"Stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you, for this very purpose to appoint you My servant, and My witness, both as to the things you have already seen and as to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the obedience to Satan to God, in order to receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified through faith in Me" (Acts xxvi. 16—18).

"He bid me stand upon my feet," Paul would reflect, "not to be bound hand and foot and cast into the outer darkness," but to be sent to recant all his avowals and to place himself helpless into the hands of those whom he had so shamefully wronged. He is to turn the Gentiles from darkness into Light. Is his own darkness to be removed? How can he study the Law and the Prophets without eyes?

Now at Damascus there was a disciple of the name of Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, saying, "Ananias!" He answered, "I am here, Lord." "Rise," said the Lord, "and go to Straight Street and inquire at the house of Judas for a man called Saul, from Tarsus, for he is actually praying. He has seen a man called Ananias come and lay his hands upon him so that he may recover his sight." Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard about that man from many and I have heard of the great mischief he has done to Thy people in Jerusalem, and

here he is authorised by the High Priest to arrest all who call upon Thy name." The Lord replied, "Go, he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name to the Gentiles and to Kings and to the descendants of Israel. For I will let him know the great sufferings which he must pass through for My sake."

So Ananias went and entered the house, and laying his two hands upon Saul, said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared to you on your journey, has sent me that you may recover your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Instantly there dropped from his eyes what seemed to be scales, and he could see once more. Upon this, he rose and received Baptism; after which he took food and regained his strength (Acts ix. 10—19, Weymouth).

Paul's appointment to the Apostleship was thus then and there ratified by a hitherto unknown disciple, who was made the instrument of opening the blind eyes. Three miracles—vision, blindness, recovery. Now it is important to remember that the whole establishment of Christianity was effected through *miracle*. Neither Jesus Christ nor His teaching would have been heeded apart from His own miraculous personality and His mighty works.

"John Baptist did no miracle," and that the fact that he did no miracle was the convincing proof that Jesus did. There were in Palestine precisely the same conditions that prevailed when our Lord worked miracles, the same desire to witness signs and wonders, the same challenges thrown out to give evidence that He was a Prophet sent from God, and yet the Lord's precursor could give no satisfaction, and never pretended to essay it. There were disciples who wanted

their faith confirmed and, if any miracle were effected by John Baptist's hands, the number of believers would have been greatly increased and the renown of their master would be immensely augmented. What more striking and incontrovertible fact in support of Christ's miracles than the testimony of John's own disciples that their master could do none.

The same eager and credulous crowd roamed after John and roamed after Jesus, but the results in each case were accurately different. John's disciples ingenuously declared that their master had no such power, while those who followed Jesus were astonished above measure at the frequency and power of the miracles worked by the Master and by His disciples in His name.

There are three outstanding miracles which have come down to our own times. Three which can be tested every day, and which can be witnessed every hour. (a) The miracle of creation. (b) The miracle of the living Christ and (c) the miracle of the Holy Spirit and the Human Temples which He inhabits.

The first is made the ground of all other. Yet no one can explain it, otherwise than by miracle. Reason can offer no solution—it has to be accepted, and if the Author of Creation has created this stupendous universe, Is He not capable of expressing His will in more ways than one ? We shall recur to this anon.

The second : The miracle of the Living Christ is as demonstrable as the first. Weights and scales and measurements are not indeed applicable to the tests of spiritual realities, but proof is found by the witnesses who concur in alleging the same things, without collusion, all over the world where the Gospel is received. New experiences, a new power and a new

aim are created, and this identity of witness-bearing to positive truths, establish the facts as evidently as any material things with which all men are acquainted. The Living Christ is known and felt within.

The third. The Holy Spirit and His indwelling is provable in the same manner as the preceding.

The office of the Son of God is above. His intercession, His Rule and governance at the right hand of His Father, pleading the merits of His Incarnation. His Cross and Passion, and ceaselessly shepherding His people, as His Divine Kingdom extends. The Holy Spirit is Christ's continued presence in the human temples, whom the Lord redeemed to be His purchased possession. The reality of that is no less evident than the objects with which men are assured but by their senses.

"Show us the Father," was the constant prayer of the disciples. They were ultimately convinced that Christ was God, and with regard to the promised Paraclete, the gifts, new and unheard of, came with such power and were distributed through the Apostles so universally, that the continuous miracle made the miraculous normal in the membership of the Church. The progressive sanctification made apparent to all with whom they have to do, is the incontestable proof of the reality of the miraculous inhabitation of mortal and sinful man by the gracious Spirit of God, Christ and the Father's bestowal.

Where then is the validity of the testimony of the natural man's five senses, opposed to the millions and millions of newly created men who with one voice are prepared to testify that we have known the Revelation of Jesus Christ, in the same way that St. Paul learnt it, *i.e.*, by a miraculous preparation of the soul, a

miraculous new vision, and new-born spiritual perceptions ?

St. Paul's conversion is the standard type of all true conversions. Human will has no part in the matter. Salvation originates in the sovereign free will of God. Hence that will, being Divine and God is Love, salvation must extend as boundlessly as love itself. The Father of Jesus could never *reprobate*, or ultimately allow one of the Human Family—His brethren by His Incarnation—to be plucked from His hand. His outstretched arms embraced the world and pointed both to the believing and the unbelieving thief—bore one of them assuredly to Paradise, the other to where His “other sheep” are to be more fully instructed— trophies of His redemption, triumphant from the Cross.

The insufficiency of the five senses argument is so evidently wanting that what is miraculous is that men with intellects should ever adduce it in opposition to scripture testimony. For, as we have just been averring, and proving by Paul's conversion is, that to the Christian-believing man there is given a *sixth* sense. The men of the world, the sheep who as yet have not heard the Shepherd's voice, have only five senses, but the men who believe in, love and follow Jesus, have one sense more. The sixth may be called the God sense—ruling and reigning within them. By that sixth sense, they *know* God, feel the working of the Spirit, and have communications from the spirit-world to them, manifesting its operation in individuals, and in assemblies.

Nothing is so irrational and impious as for poor mortal man, with his poor five senses, in regard to the quality and powers of which he is much surpassed by

several inferior brutes, putting himself up as the standard by which the miraculous can be judged, and refusing belief for aught that his five senses cannot certify.

It has not been by his five senses that man has extended the boundaries of his knowledge. It was by his reasoning powers, in conjunction with such instruments as his reason suggested. It is obvious to remark that if our present senses were improved and exalted they would bring to our knowledge myriads of new facts, *e.g.*, the invisible electric currents, the invisible currents of the air, the invisible rays of light with their new appropriate colours, the X-rays and radium activity, new notes of music, above and below our scales. Nerve and skin sensibility augmented and the brain likewise, the spiritual home within the perishable body. An improved and exalted man would be soon made ashamed of his incredulity as to miracle. "But it would be all under law," it is said. What is meant by law? Simply God's will in operation. Cannot the Law-Giver cancel one and introduce another? Must He who created matter be deprived of a mind and a will? Is God a prisoner in His own Universe? These queries, which are justified, suggest the folly of questioning miracles.

What was necessary to give Divine warrant to the monstrous claims calmly asserted by the new prophet was unprecedented deeds, such as the world never saw before. Whether the unprecedented works were brought about by abrogating certain laws and endowing others with greater efficiency for a temporary purpose, it would be sufficient to show forth that God was Master in His own House. But apart

from that, we assert that God's will is the fount of law, that all natural laws are His obedient servants, and that the imposition of new laws, or the creation of new matter, must be permanently the normal action of the Divine Will. His intelligence is ever active, and what to be wondered at is, that miracle is not more frequent. The only adequate definition of miracle is a *sample of creative power*. Now, as regards spirit, the miraculous is going on daily and hourly. The new births by the Holy Spirit, each a separate instance of creative power, take place all over the world, of course, on a greater scale in Christian lands. Now, does not God reign equally in matter as in spirit? If He is creating daily in the one, can He and will He not also reign in the other, for an adequate reason. I am quite assured, not only that He can, but that He does manifest His good pleasure in giving samples of creative power, when his dependent children require it.

What the children of the Kingdom are to expect is not the normal, but the unexpected, and the unprecedented Saviour. We are not only entitled but exhorted to look for another glorious manifestation, in that same Jesus, returning in glory. Then will arise from their graves the supermen, clad in Resurrection glory. The new race—Nitches philosophy—wearing the new habiliments becoming the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, when He shall make all things new, correcting the faulty, eliminating the injurious, and adding new beneficent potencies to the existing framework of the Universe. He who made one Universe on one plan, is certainly able to make another universe on another plan—*C'est le premier pas qui coute*.

How profound must have been the dejection, the

repentance and the unavailing remorse which must have seized St. Paul and held him, after Ananias had opened his eyes. While his eyeballs were yet sightless, the salutation, "Saul, my brother," began to fill them with cutting tenderness. This new face immediately after looked up so kindly at him, that it brought up harrowing recollections of another equally holy and Heavenly countenance, which he would, but could not, banish. That previously unknown Saint had evidently lived very close to God, and to be spoken to, in vision, occasioned no discomposure. On the contrary he was permitted to make an expostulation, and the Lord condescends to give reasons. What an amazing transference of conditions ! from that of consciously guilty unforgiven sinner to the same, when fully forgiven and allowed to enter upon a colloquy with the Creator and Judge ! It is singular that St. Paul never mentions Ananias in any of his Epistles. The inestimable service that he rendered in opening his eyes and baptizing him, when the Holy Spirit fell upon him, would, one would imagine, prevent ever Ananias falling away from his regards. He is, however, immortalized in every Christian breast, and when we shall be summoned to go to the City where all the streets are straight, one of our rewards will be to find him out, and say "Ananias, my brother. I have been sent to you by the Lord."

The new Apostle, with his equipment complete, lost no time in using his seed basket to scatter the seed of Immortal Life. He began "at once" to proclaim in the Synagogues Jesus as the Son of God. All who heard him were naturally amazed

"Is not this," they asked, "the man who worked havoc in Jerusalem among those that invoke this

Name? Who had also come here for the express purpose of having such persons put in chains and taken before the Chief Priests? ”

Saul's influence, however, kept steadily increasing, and he confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by the proofs that he gave that Jesus was the Christ. (20th Cent.—N.T.)

It is important to remember that the personal testimony was the sole foundation of the new Faith, which was destined to continue to grow and become universal. None of the other Apostles accompanied St. Paul in his first steps in his missionary labours. He had, indeed, the Jewish Scriptures, but nothing of our Lord's life, death and resurrection had been recorded. The foundation stones of the new religion were laid in the memories of souls of twelve comparatively unlettered men, to whose ranks was added one, born out of due time, the only Rabbi, trained to defend the Jewish system which Christianity threatened, simply by fulfilling it.

If St. Paul were questioned as to his acquaintance with the Lord, and his teaching and miracles in Palestine, he should have to confess that he had no experience of it all. He never saw Him but in Heavenly Vision, and never heard Him save when He spake to him from Heaven. There were several who attended the Commissioner doubtless and remained at Damascus and could be sought out to testify that there was a great light and all were struck to the ground, but no words reached their ears. So far, that much was valuable in corroborative testimony, of an inexplicable occurrence, but its significance was lost for want of the risen and glorified Christ and the words announcing His Kingdom. All depended upon the credibility of

the witness, who was alone, and alone saw and alone heard the substance of the message which he was to testify. Was it to be wondered at that this singular young man, who seemed to be half crazed, with his three-legged story, should not readily gain credence? The Rationalists in the Synagogues soon found reasons for disbelief. They would account for the fall to the ground by a sunstroke, and for the vision, by the excessive brightness which conjured up a fantastic imagination in the moment when the orbs of the eye were being destroyed. If Ananias was brought to testify to the miracle of healing, his account was prejudiced by his having to relate another Heavenly visitation. Both in the eyes of square-headed men appeared a couple of fools or impostors to whom to listen to was a waste of time. They were only made formidable by the unaccountable fact that converts were at length being made. Yes! the word began to be mixed with faith in those who heard it. Immediately the absurd Cult began to be traduced and its followers persecuted.

“Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus, and straightway he preached Christ in the Synagogues, that He is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said, ‘Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the Chief Priests?’ But Saul increased the more in strength and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ.” (Acts ix. 19—22). Even the Rationalists had finally to admit that in arguing from the Prophets, Paul was no fool; his studies in the Scriptures were his invaluable support when up-

holding his incredible story, and then amiable indifference gave place to ravenous hatred. During his stay the infant Church was increasing, and had he not been thus faithful, he would not have been successfully introduced to the fellowship of the Church at Jerusalem. Barnabas was able to say of him "He had seen the Lord in the way, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus." (Acts ix. 27.)

It was this bold preaching that "after many days led the Jews to take counsel to kill him. But their laying await was known of Saul, and they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night and let him down by the wall in a basket." (Acts ix. 23—25.)

Ere we follow him back to Arabia, whither, I believe, he proceeded, and then returned to Damascus, before he sought acquaintanceship with the Apostles at Jerusalem. (Gal. i. 17, 18.) Let us look again at the miraculous element in the starting of the world-wide Evangel.

The stupendous fabric of the Christian Church, which is spreading over the entire world, and is inseparably conjoined to the highest civilization that has as yet appeared, was due, at the first, simply to the narration of an individual experience of quite a supernatural character.

The Church at Jerusalem, of course, had the means of summoning a very large number of witnesses to the fact of the risen Christ, but the planting of the Churches in Asia Minor before Barnabas accompanied him in their first missionary journey, was the work of Paul alone and in that work he was engaged for many years, supposed to be itinerating, sowing the seed

in Cilicia, Galatia and Phrygia. Without any other confirmatory evidence, he would repeat and repeat the wondrous manner in which the Lord had dealt with him. He had seen the Lord, and therefore he could preach him as the risen Christ, the slayer of death and the opener of the gate to Eternal Life. Would the incredible story remain as an immortal seed, revolutionising the whole thought of subsequent generations if it had not been true? If the contents of the Gospel, preached by Paul, was wholly miraculous, the preacher himself was not less so. He had no New Testament to carry about with him, not even a leaflet. The whole Evangel was bound up in his heart. The very want of *documentary* evidence is the crowning proof of that other Divine witness—the Holy Spirit—without which the testimony of the entire Apostolate would have wholly failed. The great Messenger had been dealt with miraculously. The facts he was to proclaim were entirely miraculous. The reception given to his marvellous story was equally miraculous, and more important than all, the effects of faith in the Gospel he preached, begot within his disciples holiness, peace, joy and love, and a lively hope that they would never die.

To what then was the marvellous success to be attributed? To nothing but the supernatural, the unconquerable spirit of God. The believers were successfully overcome and enslaved, and rejoiced in their magnificent emancipation.

Just as the Churches of Asia Minor were planted in miracle, so were the Gentiles in Palestine made proselytes to the New Evangel. St. Peter and Cornelius were given objective visions, each fifty miles apart, and had audible communications, in Cornelius' case

from an Angel in shining garments. It may be said, "All that belonged to the age of miracle, and we, wiser, have no historical verities to compare with them." We reply the Incarnation, the Resurrection, the Ascension and the Descent of the Holy Spirit, needed not and could not be repeated. Those events took place in the age of miracle, but as John's disciples could not rake up a single miracle to put against the multitude performed by the Lord Jesus, in that same age of miracles, so must we distinguish between the legendary and the true. It was the scheme of the Evil One to deceive the multitude and to discredit the authentic and the Divine, and place everything supernatural, whatever its origin, in the same category. But miracles are to be known by their fruits and the blessed results that ensued upon Peter's preaching to the company in the House of Cornelius, the falling upon all of the Holy Spirit, triumphantly places all the chain of miracles preceding that second Pentecost in a category by itself, or rather it places them in a unique class of stupendous miracles which had to be recorded for all time and are at the very base of the only Revealed Truth.

Both the great Apostles had visions, revelations and Angelic visitations. Let the results prove whether they were genuine and Divine. St. Peter's at Rome, and St. Paul's in London, are the monumental vindications of their sublime origin. It is only the Divine that triumphs and endures.

CHAPTER XIV.

ST. PAUL AT DAMASCUS, JUST AFTER HIS CONVERSION.

THE haunting memory of a *single case* of injury to an unoffending man, woman, or child, would be enough to poison the springs of memory during a life-time. But this doomed Persecutor, quite unable to compensate any of his victims, had to sustain the awful punishments, not of one or two injured or murdered persons only, but scores, and through relationship, hundreds, if not thousands. The bread winner was torn from his avocation and his family plunged into poverty. The mother was dragged, with or without her babe, to the pestiferous dungeon. Youths and maidens just presuming to grasp the Pilgrim's staff, found it transformed into a Cross. And either embraced it or escaped it by a Peter denial, without a Peter's saving repentance. What preliminaries to a life's career! What a chorus of accusing furies to follow behind him, whom he could never dismiss, who would mount up the stairs and sit circling at the foot of his bed, showing themselves behind his eyelids and sending their reproaches and their wailings into his heart.

Paul would then turn from side to side, while bitter tears bedewed his pillow, and no relief could he obtain—none at all—except from a vision of *Stephen*, more glorious and more radiant even than when with his last breath he exclaimed, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Stephen would whisper in his ear, "Brother Saul, my prayers for you and all have been heard. My glorious crucified Intercessor has pre-

veiled. Be comforted ! Look to Him ! ” Then Paul would see the Damascus vision again, and, like Stephen, fall asleep. Yes ! sound sweet sleep. Much sinning, he had been much forgiven. No reservations, no penances, no partial remissions to make up what was wanting (as if anything could be wanting in the Redeemer’s perfect work). No deficiencies in the sacrificial substitution. No breath of aspersion, dulling the mirror-like polish of the perfect righteousness. Nothing could the sinning mortal bring to Him who is the sum of all perfections. Nothing wanted but a broken heart, praises and thanksgiving and undying love and service.

That is the new man. Sealed and sanctified and made meet for his new career. He had plunged into crimes of the deepest dye. Hoping and aspiring to be a real power in his nation, and through it, to make it an Apostolic people ; gathering all the families of the world unto the same privileges and blessings guaranteed to Abraham’s seed ; and he had begun by cursing it irredeemably. He could not undo one of the scourgings, nor remit one day’s imprisonment. Still less bring back from the grave one of the victims whom he had devoted to suffering and death. And yet these terrible beginnings, so strangely contrasting with his desires and intentions, were exactly suited to make him the Apostle he became. Urging him to new enterprises, to face new perils, to endure more trials (the daily trial of a hard and unremunerative handicraft was chronic and unescapable), to be ever constant in afflictions and never to be diverted from the one thing given him to do. To be quickened in sympathy for those who are in ignorance, and to be ready to excuse and forgive

those who in mistaken zeal for the law, would destroy the Herald of God's free and unmerited favour, obtained for ever for the world by the sacrifice of Christ—that was the fittest preparation that Paul could have undergone. No longer accusing Furies, but an army of the spirits of the blessed dead, crying to him from their thrones of martyrdom, and offering to him their palms, and with sweet, cheering voices telling him: "You are one of us. It is due to you that we are and Whose we are. Bear yourself well. Run well and obtain the prize—the prize we are enjoying, and the prize which our Lord Jesus desires to confer upon you, of nearest fellowship with Himself." Yes! Paul was finely prepared. It is thus and wherefore that sin and suffering enters the world, in order that the world may know and increase its saints.

It was but a few of saints, so far, in the early history of the Church, whose happy spirits cheered the hearts of the Pioneers. But just ponder the countless army of the Redeemed since Paul's days. This man had within him all the precious Epistles which he addressed to the Churches and were written casually, just as flint and steel come together for occasion, and then there is coruscation and the sparks never die, but are set, like stars. Think of the innumerable Church which now gives voice to the doctrines of Paul, in the words of Paul. Ought we not to be strenuous and unwearied: when those who are behind the veil are such an exceeding great army, and all of them knowing Paul's epistles by heart?

Meantime Paul's sojourn in Damascus was so successful in adding to the Church that he became the object, in turn, of the bitterest suspicion and

enmity. His power and effectiveness was such, that when the Jews could not confute his reasonings, he plotted to silence his voice for ever. They watched the gates day and night. It is clear that he had with him a devoted company of converts and that at the gates, where so many congregate, the object of the conspirators might fail of accomplishment. Therefore, feeling within himself that he was a man of Destiny, having to play a great part in the fortunes of the world, he fell back upon his dear old voices, who confirmed him, or dissuaded him from any self purpose that might arise in his mind, and which, yielding to their whispers, gave him the assurance that his decisions were approved by his unerring Guide.

Paul then could tell his friends and the Church that his work at Damascus was done for the present and he must leave them and be no longer a source of anxiety to them. He told them that he was being led to return to the honourable family where he had spent a few happy years, as a pedagogue; and the children he had taught, being attached to him, he trusted to win over as converts also. That, in the comparative solitude and peace of the Arabian desert, he believed he would be recruited body and spirit and given greater successes after study and meditation. The idea of Jerusalem was repellent; his career there as persecutor had completely changed his feeling towards it. Once the idol of his imagination, it was henceforward nothing but duty could induce him to voluntarily return to it. *There* were the scenes of his cruelty and shame, and the quarry, spotted by Stephen's blood, made the stones cry out against him.

Very different were his reminiscences of Arabia. The wide spaces ; the sparse trees which seemed to beckon him and wished him to recline under their scanty foliage ; there he had perused and re-perused the Prophets, and he longed to find more correspondences between prediction and fulfilment to convince his brethren in the flesh, and also the Gentile world. He was happy in knowing that not self-will, but obedience decided his action. So he now hesitated no longer. But every gate was watched, day and night, and it was clear that Paul must take with him only what he could carry. A friendly convert had a house on the wall, with a window, through which the former High Commissioner might be passed, like a bundle down to the ground. Paul was ready for any humiliation (though his gorge rose when he remembered the swinging basket, and suddenly stopped when he was about to allude to Apostolic adventures and sufferings in defence of his high claim, against his traducers at Corinth).

There was nothing for it but to choose a dark night, a stealthy meeting in the house upon the wall, prayers, affectionate farewells. Then, gripping his precious parchments and promising to return, he committed himself to the osiers and the rope which faithfully played their part, and at the bottom a voice came from the impenetrable darkness. It was that of a young disciple who was to accompany him, and both took the disguise of artizans bearing baskets of tools, and a bit of a moon tipped a wink to the surrounding stars that Paul was safe.

CHAPTER XV

PAUL IN ARABIA, THE SECOND TIME.

How soothing and grateful the monotony of customary duties, and with young people who regarded him with affection. The merchant and his family perceived a great change had passed over him, and something prevented them from pressing curious inquiries. His lively volubility was almost exchanged for reticence.

He had aged considerably, but there was a deeper tenderness in his eye and voice, and his thoughtfulness and consideration for others was greater.

"I wonder," said his wife to her husband, "if he had become a Nazarene—that new sect, you know, who are being rooted out at Jerusalem. I met a small party of them, they look and speak like that. Something has happened to his eyes, but not to disfigure them. They are brighter and more beautiful than ever."

No specific duties were exacted from Paul, and he was freely allowed, while advancing the education of the children to bring them by degrees to acquaintance with the foretellings of the Messiah and their fulfillments in Jesus.

They loved to go with him on little excursions, when his meditations and his reading and writings were over. Such a one they arranged, and they renewed again the well remembered happy day when they went to the Pagan temple and found it fallen. It had fallen on the night when our Lord broke the bands

of death and left the sepulchre empty. Paul seized the opportunity, and after an interesting survey of the ruins he told the wondrous story of the Nazarene, his crucifixion and Resurrection, on the day that he announced that He would arise. He told them that He had died for the sins of the world and that he, himself, did not know it, until, amid his ignorance and sinfulness, Jesus appeared to him in a blaze of Heavenly glory, a light surpassing noonday, and spake to him and called him to be a "chosen vessel" to carry the "Good news."

"You like good news, don't you?" he said.

"Oh, yes!" they both said, and their eyes sparkled. "But," said the girl, "dear Paul, you look so grave when you talk of the 'Good news,' " and she looked up to him appealingly.

Paul turned his face quickly away, and when he could see them again, the children were still, and looked earnestly into his grave, yet shining countenance.

Solitudes are the places where God's voice whispers under the great Dome of His Heaven. It can be heard more clearly far from the "madding crowd." It is the place for command of one's own time, one's own body, one's own mind, one's own reflections, and one's own soul. The most congenial friend may babble foolishly, or hitch off a train of reflection, which promised to take us to a fruitful field: or if we had internally been brought into a mood befitting our contemplations, the interjections of a chattering companion may jar injuriously because his then mood was not ours. It is only One Friend's Voice Whom we never tire of hearing. One Friend Whom we never desire to dismiss, Whose speaking never comes inopportune.

tunely, except when we, in heart, depart. Whose continued absence would make the wilderness unbearable.

All God's great servants are sent occasionally into the solitudes, to fit them for service by sitting long at the feet of God. From His footstool we look up and learn the awful distance.

Moses fed the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law, in the land of Midian. David fed the flocks of his father Jesse, John Baptist gathered all his experiences of contemporary life in Jerusalem, examined them, searched them by the light of the desert sun, and then lifted up his voice in condemnation.

Jesus' baptism was not sufficient to completely equip Him for His ministry. Before He commenced it He was driven into the Wilderness, where articulations are clear, whether from Heaven or Hell. There, while the Heavenly Dove nestled safely within His heart, Satan perceiving Him alone tripped across the wastes, but found nothing in Him. Paul felt that he had been driven from Damascus to his recent home, and that all had been wisely and mercifully ordered for the best preparation for his great career. No restless yearnings vexed him, he was entirely at peace with himself and God. Planning nothing, waiting simply to be moved and sent, or stopped, or kept in patience, or denied some self-willed purpose. Asking counsel of no human friend, reputed to be wiser, so his friends might think, than he was, but asking of God only, seeking to be preserved with a sanctified will, obedient and ready to go or stay in a settled confidence in God as his Guide and Counsellor. With the same boldness, courage and fidelity that he ever manifested in preaching the glad tidings, he had at Damascus without a moment's hesitation began to proclaim

Jesus in the Synagogues of Damascus—a most forbidding task—considering his antecedents. Having borne his witness at the risk of his life, God now bade him rest quietly, to be taught, with the ministry of nature, to arrive at the right interpretations to be given to the dark sayings of the men of old. Jesus was to him the Way, the Truth and the Life. He had much to unlearn and glorious things to learn as he sat at the footstool of God. Sometimes his affectionate hand would press the heads of his young charges and they would pause under it, as some new light came flooding on some cryptic utterances of a prophet, and forgetting the benediction he meant to pronounce, he would hurry away to his books and parchments, to search or verify his discovery. And the young people, boy or girl, would follow after him, and say with arch reproachfulness and sunny humour in their eyes and voices, “Dear Paul, you forgot to bless us after all.” Whereupon he would pour out a blessing with added interest—mount them upon his shoulders, shepherd-wise, while they buried their fingers in his curly hair. It was long before he had his head polled at Cenchrea.

Sweet days in Arabia! perhaps the happiest in his life. He was commonly desirous of penetrating the indefinable shapes upon the distant horizons—groups of palms or terebinths. He would take long tramps to find the number and character of the groves. Then reaching them, a light wind would spring up and all the leaves would clap their hands, flattered by a visit from one of the Lords of Creation. The trees would pelt him with fruit and with his open scrolls, patterned by light and shade, blessings and dooms. Paul, stretched under the groves,

would tuck into his brain those explications of the prophets which he was to find so valuable in his controversies in the School of Tyrannus at Ephesus—at the two Antiochs, or at Jerusalem, in disputing with the unconvertable Pharisaic section of the Nazarenes, each wanting to adulterate and water the Wine of the Gospel.

It is not unlikely that it was during this sojourn in Arabia that the main argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews suggested itself. He deemed it a valuable exercise to put down, as he went on with his reading, to construct an exposition of the Revelation which he had received from Heaven and show how gloriously types and shadows of the Law had in Christ received their fulfilment.

What is to follow is based, indeed, upon supposition, but there are reasons for giving it a high probability. Hence I would invite the reader's attention to it.

Paul, I conceive, had come at this juncture to the crisis of his spiritual development. Before his extended career, before his trance in the Temple, when Jesus bade him "Go far hence to the Gentiles," the preparation providentially provided for was in Arabia. He felt within himself the necessity of reviewing his previous theological positions. He had to recast the entire body of his beliefs, in regard to the Messiah and also of the kind of Kingdom that He was about (in the next parenthesis of human history) to found.

Before he could preach and expound what God had now given him to assimilate, he would avail himself of this period of desert solitude: and taking down the fabric of his former creed, pull it down to

the ground and reconstruct it under the light of his Damascus Revelations.

All his Rabbinical lore came up for examination. Stone after stone was tested, re-shaped or rejected. Judaism stood like a building unfinished—one end awaiting completion, as the Lady Chapel of the Liverpool Cathedral, an adjunct only of the principal structure; capable, indeed, of daily use, but showing in its thrusts, unmated springs of arches, and projecting ends of beams, that the Judaism which rejected Jesus urgently required to be completed—that the Scribes and Pharisees were unable rightly to divine what the architect had intended, and that the plan was lost or wilfully departed from. But to himself, favoured by special Revelations, the plan was clear. It was for him to remove obscurities and misconceptions: to show how difficulties may be resolved, and to furnish a handy treatise which might prove valuable to sincere searchers after the Truth. He meditated a disquisition, not a polemic. He was not in controversy with shameless opponents as with Galatians, or put upon his defence against abjuring Corinthians, nor had the “mystery” of the admission of the Gentile world into the privileges of the Abrahamic covenant been miraculously demonstrated. At this time, his thought was concentrated upon his own people, and believing them to be the destined agents for enlightening the world, he designed a demonstration of the accurate and glorious fulfilments to be discovered in the Lord Jesus as the true and only Messiah. He would keep his notes for present and future use: the conclusions of a deeply studied meditation of the comparative excellencies of the former and the present dispensations.

This, I conceive, was the manner and the occasion of the Epistle to the Hebrews, St. Paul kept his excursus by him, for private use for the present at the outset of his Apostolic career. At first he owned his commission to preach to his own people, and later on, his field was extended and he was especially sent to the Gentiles; hence for long his absorbing interest was in the Greek Churches. At the close of his great career he took up, in his imprisonment at Rome, the MS. that he had carried with him about in all his journeys—thought it might serve a useful purpose. Instead of addressing it to a single Church of Jewish Christians, he made it a circular epistle to the Hebrews scattered abroad. Himself a prisoner, he asked prayer on his behalf, and told of Timothy's release. Thus it may be fairly presumed that this Epistle was launched upon the world—written in a style, comparatively young and rhetorical, but full of glowing fervour. Yet Paul did not care to put his name to it—content that it would serve to confirm his compatriots' Christian faith, as it had his own. And now it has become one of those problems which certain minds delight to batten upon, and I am perhaps guilty for having increased the volume of insoluble enigmata.

As to the objection raised on the score of difference of literary style, I would draw attention to the small force there is in such a consideration. Authors are not compelled to be always the same in the manner of addressing an audience. The novel of "The Caxtons" and that of "Rienzi" are so dissimilar that both would never be attributed to Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton. Southey's "Doctor," on the same ground, would not be assigned to the author of the

“Life of Nelson.” The same consideration applies to the work of a man who, at the outset of his career, publishes anonymously, and then at the end of his career would like to re-write or cancel what he had put out long previous. The early works of Carlyle are not full of Carlylism’s, and Ruskin found fault and expunged the finest portions of his first volume of “Modern Painters.” So, on the score of *style*, no final objection can be raised.

A more serious objection has been alleged.* It has been said that while the great theme of Paul’s preaching and writing was the “Mystery” of the impartation of Abrahamic blessings to the Gentiles, in this Epistle to the Hebrews that grand distinctive theme is absent. But certainly the thing itself is implied throughout, and if not mentioned in the terms usually employed in his other Epistles, it is suggested that the reason is, probably, that it was in the period of his Arabian retirement. Before those visions and revelations which were vouchsafed to Paul, as also to Peter—fitting them both to become Openers of the Kingdom of Heaven to the Jews and Gentiles alike.

The chief direction of his thought at this period was given to the setting forth of the development of Christian doctrine from the nascent Evangel, latent in the Levitical Economy. To make the Jews, the agents for changing the face of the world. He perhaps believed that God designed to send him first of all to his own nation ; before in vision he was bidden to leave the Temple and to go far hence to the Gentiles.

He felt that after this preparation he would be free to go to Jerusalem, to make the acquaintance of the

* By the late Professor Frederick Purser, E.T.C.D., to the Author.

rest of the Apostles. He anticipated that further visions and grand disclosures were yet reserved for him, bearing upon his Gentile Apostleship, but those disclosures, at this early period, would be premature. It was, after the Arabian sojourn, that by revelation he was made to know the mystery of God's holy will, to gather all things together into one—the entire created Universe destined to become the radiant garment of the Invisible Spirit—all wills purged from defilement, and all absolutely moving in subjection and harmony with the uncreated will. But the great emancipation must proceed in due order. First the Jews, then the Gentiles. First, original mankind; and second, redeemed mankind, under the millennium.

But if the absence from the Epistle to the Hebrews of the word *μυστήριον* is to weigh against the Pauline authorship, another word, *μεσίτης* (Mediator), in its Pauline use is confined to this contested Epistle. St. Paul it was who gave to *μεσίτης* its theological signification, and made Christ the only *Mediator* between God and man. This word, in this use of it, is confined to St. Paul, and to the Epistle to the Hebrews, vide Hebrews viii.—6, ix.—15, xii.—24, and a derivative (*εμεσίτευσεν*) vi. 17. Moreover, the Epistle to the Hebrews was concerned, as its main topic with *Mediatorship*. Paul employing the term with the same signification in Galatians iii. 19—20, and 1 Timothy, ii. 3—5. Alford translates *μεσίτης* “Mediator,” Weymouth “Negotiator,” The Twentieth Century, N.T., “Intermediary” (*passim*).

Now if this use of this word is practically confined to St. Paul in his Epistles to Galatians and 1 Timothy, and is found elsewhere only in *Hebrews*, is there not a

strong probability that the writer of both is the same ? Philo's use of the term only confirms the probability of the Pauline authorship, for Philo's works could not be unknown to the doctors at Jerusalem.

Now another confirmation.

Melchizedek, Psalm cx. 4, "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent. Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."

Hebrews v. 6—10, chapter vi. verse 20; Genesis xiv. 18; Hebrews vii. 1—21.

Now, as I have intimated, in dealing with Paul's early life, the subject that occupied the youth's attention from the first was the Abrahamic Covenant, which disclosed blessings for all the other nations, and the history of the great patriarch was ever in his thoughts. Necessarily the passage in it which brought Abraham into contact with the mysterious High Priest led him to ponder what was the significance of the old and new Covenants. When in Arabia he was day after day searching and revolving a means of connecting his Jewish positions with the new revelations made to himself, and hence Melchizedek was constantly before him. No other of the Apostles had such a grounding in the law. The relationship of Melchizedek to the Aaronic priesthood, and that to the great High Priest, who had just passed into the Heavens, was present to his daily meditations, hence, when he came to write down his conclusions, one chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews is nearly occupied by it. Paul was just the man to construct the argument which he so powerfully developed in Hebrews vii.

Apollos, who was indebted to the teaching of Aquila and Priscilla, had not the same special revelation that were granted to Paul, and the controversial

tone is absent in Hebrews. Apollos was in an especial manner a controversialist, not an expositor. Paul was also pre-eminently a controversialist, but it was in his subsequent Apostolic career, not at the time, as I deem it, that he was excogitating his original thought concerning the Mediator.

What St. Paul, it may be presumed, did, was to put down his carefully arrived at conclusions for, first of all, clarifying his own conceptions, then as his meditations were continued and subsequently new revelations were made, it seemed to him the private treatise might be useful to Hebrew Christians generally. And being himself withdrawn from active labour, probably imprisoned at Rome, he took up his old faithful excursus, and believed it capable of useful adaptation, sending it as an Encyclical to converts of both Jews and Gentiles, in the first place to the Church at Rome, and bidding the Churches to pass it on.

Why it was not sanctioned by Paul is not an argument against the authorship, but for it—in default of express mention to the contrary. Several reasons might make it expedient to let the treatise tell its tale, without any prejudice being imported to its authorship. In the divided condition of the Corinthian Church, where there were parties for Paul, for Cephas and for Apollos, a candid judgment might be prevented.

We conclude then that there is no valid objection to be raised against the authorship of Hebrews by St. Paul on the grounds of,

- (a) The style of the Epistle. It was not originally a letter, but a treatise afterwards adapted.
- (b) The language. It is marked by Paul's peculiarity, The Mediator.

- (c) The want of allusion to the *mystery*, because (1) it was addressed to Hebrews. (2) The extension of the Covenant of Grace to the Gentiles had not then been promulgated.
- (d) Apollos is unfitted to fill the place by want of a special revelation and also being essentially a Controversialist, his method would appear in his writing, which does not betray itself in the Epistle in question.

On the other hand much can be brought in, in favour of the Pauline authorship.

- (1) St. Paul was deeply pondering the extension of the Kingdom of Grace to the Gentile world, and had pledged himself to preach the Gospel to all nations. The doctrines of Free Grace, Redemption through the blood of the Lamb and the High Priestly Intercessor in the Heavens could not better be proclaimed than by St. Paul.
- (2) The illustration of the stadium would naturally arise from his experience at Tarsus, and
- (3) His eloquent setting forth of the heroes of faith (seventh chapter) was just such an argument as would be quoted by a student of the sacred records.
- (4) Paul's original use of his *Μεσίτης* (Mediator).
- (5) There was a chief school of Alexandrian theology at Tarsus, where Paul was reared.
- (6) The agreement, both by the Reformed and the Catholic Church, to attribute the authorship to St. Paul.
- (7) If this Epistle was not written by St. Paul, the question arises: How could a production of such distinguished excellence be wrongly

accredited ? He was known to Paul's friends and to many Churches, especially at Rome. How could he be hid in this inconceivable manner—a man so cultured and powerful, it would seem impossible to have his name buried.

Finally, to recur once more to the question of style. Our surmise is that in the calm retirement of Arabia, the peace he was enjoying reflected itself in his style, calm, regular, balanced, but infused throughout with Divine fervour. The essay characteristic was due to Paul having been an apt scholar, who profited by the Pedagogues of Alexandria, Tarsus, and the Rabinnical School of Jerusalem. It was easy to adapt the treatise and give it an epistolary form. Wordsworth composed *The Prelude*, and did not give it to the world until after his collected works were deemed complete. He kept touching it and re-touching it and the publication was posthumous. Haydn kept "Creation" in a drawer, adding and improving it. Paul's Excursus, or rather his great Hermeneutic, was made perfect before he launched it upon the Church at Rome, from which it was to circulate and become a priceless possession of the Universal Church.

CHAPTER XVI.

PAUL GOES TO DAMASCUS AND THEN TO JERUSALEM.

THE season of Peace is now over. Arabia was to become a mere memory, but among Paul's personal baggage he meant to preserve carefully those notes which would be incorporated in the Epistle to the Hebrews. What the exact length of his sojourn in the desert was we know not, it could not well be less than a year and a half; and then he returned to Damascus. He had quitted it clandestinely under stress of threatened assassination; but since then the Nazarenes had so multiplied that he went about among the rejoicing believers confirming their faith with great comfort of spirit. Damascus, as his spiritual birthplace, must needs have great attractions for him; but thence he must go to Jerusalem—a city now cursed by horrifying associations. As a boy, Jerusalem was a golden dream; as a man and a bloody persecutor, it had become a cursed and felon city. It must have been, it ought to have become, a place which he, by his own misdeeds, had befouled, and made the nest of every hateful crime of cruelty against the most beloved children of the Most High. How could he pace its streets without a tingling cheek, a downcast glance and deep fetched sighs, fearful lest, as he glanced askance at the portal, he might see traces of blood at the lintels, where stone and plaster were clutched, when the myrmidons of the Sanhedrim haled men and women to prison and budged not to direct and witness their execution.

It is thus we build our mansions of memory. There are rooms, which, by retrospective glances, we desire to pass, but cannot. The doors open of themselves and jailors issue to seize us and hale us to the prison house, where we are held for execution, unless God reprieve us. It was difficult to get fellowship at Jerusalem after the fatal chapters of his life. This was not the first unhappy instance of very many, by which Paul was to be subsequently beset all through his missionary career. Naturally the Church suspected him, but the intimate acquaintanceship of Peter during fifteen days did the work of a complete restoration to confidence. When this ravening wolf which had scattered the lambs, and had sent them far and wide, carrying with them the lambs' flag of victory all around Samaria and Galilee, it was no wonder that the disciples were afraid, and "believed not that he was a disciple." But good "Barnabas took him"—a large man with a large heart—and brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them "How he had seen the Lord in the way and that He had spoken to him (his credentials to the Apostolate, in place of the mistaken Matthias), and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians, but they went about to slay him. Which, when the Brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus. Then had the Churches rest throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost were multiplied" (Acts ix. 26—31).

Halcyon Days ! But it was only after Paul was shipped off at Cæsarea to Tarsus. He was ever a disturbing force. Storms sunk to rest when he left the place. Yet it was as a Lamb, newly born, that he arrived at Jerusalem, and towards the "Grecians" (Hellenist Jews) that his heart chiefly turned. If he had betrayed his Lord, by withholding the Glad Tidings which he was thrust forth to proclaim, he would have spared himself such a persecution as he had formerly directed against the Nazarenes. The newly born Lamb could in no wise do that. To bear the cross and to be stretched upon it was his "only way." So by his bold preaching he gave mortal offence to the Hellenists and they plotted to slay him. For ever a trouble to the Church, as he had been at Damascus, so now his deadly peril occasioned daily anxiety. He was a storm centre, with his tender and sensitive nature he was creating enemies all round. Oh ! Truth ! what crimes and sufferings attend thy promulgation !

The members of the Church were vastly relieved when they deposited the Storm Centre within a ship bound for Tarsus, dear old Tarsus ! The Storm Centre gazed with curious interest at the city which he felt he had a mission to disturb. But it was after a long span of years, when he had created an explosion at Jerusalem and was bottled up for two years in prison and plagued two Roman Governors, Felix and Festus, likewise Herod Agrippa and his wife. Could he not hold his tongue ? No ! not for worlds. When the Storm Centre was finally despatched to Rome, the ship, of course, must get into a storm and be shipwrecked. But though being a Storm Centre himself and always creating storms, both Heaven and

Earth conspire to protect him amid all. Not a hair shall be touched until he is bidden to lay his hoary head upon Nero's block. Since then there was peace—the busy tongue laid under an interdict. Peace in Heaven, but not on Earth, Paul had gone forth to sow unending storms.

Every man has his destiny. Our wills are not our own, and with every new-born child his or her horoscope is drawn—a birth-mark which to escape is to leave one's skin. At the birth of Time Paul had his. But don't imagine, Foolish Reader! that you can hocus pocus the Almighty and escape your individual moral responsibility. Justice and Predestination and Free Rebellion, Judgment and Grace are all reconciled by that same Cross by which God has reconciled the world unto Himself. Judas' part was as necessary to the world's salvation as the Sin Bearer's. The glorious predestined issue of it all is the solution of God's own problem.

With the arrival at Tarsus, commenced a long hiatus in Paul's recorded doings. Some nine or ten years, by his own testimony, elapsed, which he did not care to preserve for posterity. The "fourteen years" of Galatians, ii.-1., are to be computed from Paul's conversion to his third visit to Jerusalem. This sovereign indifference to means and methods towards fulfilments and decrees, comports with God's providential rule. Men are naught, none can stay, nor speed His cause. But we can be sure that Paul remained Paul—always a storm centre—inevitably doomed to loose his tongue and make enemies whenever and wherever he opened his mouth. And, as a consequence of his faithfulness, the truth spread—invincible truth! It spread like a weed. But

how interesting it would have been for us to have but a scrap of veritable news respecting his daily associations and in what way he had been fulfilling his Lord's commission to evangelise the Gentiles.

Meantime it is not unlikely that St. Peter had already unlocked the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven to the Gentile world. The pious Cornelius, a Proselyte, was to be favoured with the glad tidings, but not without human instrumentality—angels are always in commission. They visited Cornelius and gave hungry Peter at Joppa food for reflection. Cornelius, proud to grovel at the feet of the fisherman, and humbly accepting to be lifted to his feet, took his place among the reverent company of friends. Pagan yet pious and with expectant hearts and ear attent, they waited upon the Galilean accents in which the world's Saviour was to be proclaimed.

Peter began to avow—what was a wonderful revelation to him—"that of a truth he perceived that God was no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him." And went on to proclaim the Galilean peasant to be the Lord of all, 'erst hanged upon a tree, but raised up the third day and showed Himself to chosen witnesses, even to those who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead.

That He commanded them to preach unto the people and to testify, that it is He which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead. That to Him gave all the Prophets witness, that through His name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.

Amazing miracle! While Peter yet spake these words, "the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard

the word. And they of the circumcision, which believed, were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord, and the new disciples prayed him to tarry with them certain days."

Notwithstanding, then, that to St. Paul it was given to open wide the gate to the Gentiles, yet it is not improbable that St. Peter had the supremacy even in point of time, and that the Apostle who was outrun by the younger John at the Sepulchre, reversed the issue and outran the younger Paul when both were running to peer into the Sepulchre of Paganism, and found that Paganism had already left its grave!

A tremendous uproar was, of course, made at Jerusalem, when these strange tidings reached the Jewish Christians. Instead of being full of praise and thanksgiving, the invasion of their birthrights wrought poison in their bones. St. Peter was "sent to Coventry" (a pardonable anachronism), but he had a plain unvarnished tale to relate, which quelled the storm, even as when by a word mounting Tiberias sank in adoration.

"As I began to speak the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said, John, indeed, baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as He did unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. What was I, that I could with-

stand God? When they heard these things they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, 'Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.' (Acts xi. 15—18.)

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LOST APOSTLE DISCOVERED.

WHILE these glorious things were happening, Paul was lost to us as we have said in Tarsus for a lengthy period, some nine or ten years.

When we direct a telescope to dark spaces among the stars, we discover how little we know. That blank period in Paul's record may be confidently filled up by transactions and experiences analogous to those of which we have documentary evidence. If we could only recover those Sybilline pages ! He himself will rehearse them to us in another sphere.

In 2 Corinthians xi. : in self defence of his challenged Apostleship, he was constrained to allude to some of his various sufferings in the discharge of his great commission. They were of a piece with what Luke has detailed and what Paul has casually referred to in his other Epistles.

“Are they ministers of Christ ? I speak as a fool, I am more : in labours more abundant ; in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the seas, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Beside these things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches." (2 Corinthians xi. 23—28.)

By the help of such reminiscences as these we are at no loss to fill up the vacancies left by the accounts that have come down to us. During those nine or ten years stars and even constellations studded that dark sky similar to those which we perceive with awe and admiration when we track Paul's luminous career in the Scriptures. But how much he must have grown during that formative period! and what sheaves of converts he must have made! What his relations with his kindred and the Synagogue, and what were the means by which he lived and worked we know nothing: but that the tent-maker had the nomadic instinct is pretty certain. The Cilician Gates and the waterfall which tantalised his boyish imagination had long since been found out and become commonplace. He was ever on the move and burning with zeal to communicate the glad tidings to Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free.

That Paul had few, if any, to sympathise with him in his espousal of the new and despised sect is to be surmised, also that he had no relatives who were prepared to give him a home and aid his propaganda. Even in Tarsus, it is probable, he was outlawed; and, perhaps when a prominent citizen had deliberately "cut" him, he caught sight of a friend whom he had not seen for years. Could it really be? Yes! It was—no less than Barnabas! and, tapping his broad shoulders, the two Apostles ran into one another's arms. After the joyful greeting, what was Barnabas' business? The King's business, of course, and to minister to the new citizens was the difficulty. For wonderful

conquests were going on at Antioch—across the gulf yonder. “Come, Saul, and I will tell you all! but you must help me.”

So in the governance of the world, evil is found to be an essential product of good. Shallow people are ever lifting up their hands in astonishment and formulating charges against the Divine administration, when the true explication of these “mysteries” is that no holiness and no joy can be discovered apart from the dark lenses of suffering and sin. No rewards are offered to mankind as prize cattle. As I have written in another book, “the fabric of human nature must be first steeped in the mordant of sin and suffering before it can receive and perpetuate the brightest hues that Heaven can confer.”

It is questionable whether what we call “evil” will be entirely eliminated from the abodes of the blessed. Moral evil, of course, must be, but suffering need not be. The greatest sufferer is God Himself—His sufferings are acute and constant, because He knows everything; and every writhe and every sigh echoes in His sympathetic soul; and because of that He is God, blessed for ever.

If, however, any of us poor creatures desire to relieve this greatest Sufferer, they can do it instantly. No mountain of money is required, merely the turning away from moral evil and turning towards the Beatific Father, through His adorable Son. Then, if the heart of the Eternal is rent by the afflictions of His offspring, it may instantly be relieved and thrilled with joy by the drop of a truly penitential tear and a longing glance for reconciliation and love.

This is the joy that was being scattered plentifully for God and for man in the regions of Phœnicia,

Cilicia, Cyprus and Cyrene, through the persecution that arose about Stephen and the scattering abroad of the Christian flock which Paul had vainly attempted to destroy. Without the slightest tamper with the integrity of his free will, or his due responsibility, Saul was called to the murderous work, by which he started the conquering chariot of Christianity.

Paul then is not to be credited with the spread of Christianity among the Gentiles, as sole or principal pioneer. He was especially designated to the work, and from his youth he earnestly desired that through his nation the Gentiles should share in the blessings of the Covenant, but it was Peter who was called to be first preacher, both to Jew and Gentile, and Barnabas was sent from Jerusalem to go to Antioch before probably Paul had made any Gentile converts there previously. (Acts xi. 19.)

It must have been a joyful meeting, and without any restraining bonds, except the narrow financial straits into which he was plunged by quitting the Synagogue and his Jewish friends. Paul was ready to go instantly to promote the work at the third city of the Empire. "Barnabas needed the presence of one whose wisdom was higher than his own (query) whose zeal was an example to all, and whose peculiar mission had been miraculously declared. Paul recognised the Voice of God in the words of Barnabas, and the two friends travelled in all haste to the Syrian Metropolis."

CHAPTER XVIII.

ANTIOCH.

ANTIOCH, the city which gave to the Eternal Religion its Christian name, was a strange birthplace for converts to a faith which involved renunciation of the World, the Flesh and the Devil, for these three gods were the proper divinities of the place. But it is just where commerce, the parent of wealth and all corruptions, have most flourished, that by a re-action against the prevailing godlessness, that the Voice from Heaven finds ears craving for what the heart can alone satisfy. The Seleucid Founder, with sound judgment perceived that the site might become a convenient entrepôt for the exchange of the products of the East and the West. The fertile plain, twixt Taurus and Lebanon shared with Tarsus the two ports of the gulf of Scandaroon.

Seleucus, the city, must have thriven at the expense of the former, for caravans came from Mesopotamia and Arabia, and at the Orontes the whole trade of the Mediterranean was available. Little did the Conqueror reek that his Capital city was to be a foundation stone in a building that was never to be overthrown. The present burning plains remain and also the sweeping winter rains, but the torrents plough fissures in which bright medallions glisten, the remnants of dead and buried dominations—the coins of Rome, Syria and Phœnicia. Contrasting with these, it was the flock that was scattered when Saul put his hand to persecution that became the founders of the Everlasting Empire.

Without a scrap of New Testament, but not wanting in the writings of the Prophets, and—indispensable—not wanting in the Pentecostal gift—the nameless original Apostles, to whom no statues have ever been reared, commenced at the key of the arch of Eastern and Western civilization, the building of an Empire, which will leave the World behind. Let Paul now be astonished at his handiwork. He went like another Balaam to curse, and was constrained to bless. Barnabas hurries to find him, the converts are becoming so embarrassing. So they appear in the great street—four miles long—colonaded mostly, in all its length, where masquers and mummers mingle with merchants, Exorcists and the enfranchised Jews—first colonists of Seleucus—who, as they pass along the promenade, which was plentifully lined with the latest busts of Caligula, seldom neglected to direct a jet of sputum upon the Imperial face.

It is a larger Monaco, a place where a luxurious climate disposed the wealthy and the dissolute to ask stimuli from the vain and empty “entertainments” of the theatre and the circus. A considerable and growing trade furnished the commercial classes with means, and the city, being made the capital of a Province, it became also the residence of an official class. In addition, philosophers, wizards, astrologers, came to prey upon the curious and the credulous, while the grove of Daphne—an enchanting spot, where the perfection of architecture and sculpture made no apologies for being enlisted in the service of vice, drew crowds who wanted life and succeeded only in courting death.

The spuriously gay crowd, interspersed with the only really respectable people—the slaves and freedmen engaged in labour—poured along the main

thoroughfares. There where inky shade and flashing marble outlining marts, palaces and triumphal arches, ever and anon in the distance the Orontes glinted and turned up its shield of silver. The river had high banks and oleander and jasmine lined the marge with roseate flowers and flagrant scents. The spurs of Mount Sylphus made the ancient walls to climb and descend again. Walls of great height and very thick. Yet, beneath the frivolity and guilty riot of the pleasure-seekers, there were subterranean forces, which gave to Antioch impressive lessons of instability.

Its legends of earthquakes culminated in one memorable catastrophe, when 250,000 inhabitants were estimated to have perished. The Christians of Antioch, if the epistle to the Hebrews circulated there had frequent verifications of the Writer's allusions to the removing of those things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Antioch, however, though frequently shaken, remained, and became the Queen of the East. New walls arose, enclosing new suburbs, and 300 years after Barnabas and Saul had entered it, it contained a population of half a million. During that period the Empire of Rome was shaken and declining, but at the same time the Empire of Christ was growing.

The irony of fate ! Christianity did little to alter the character of Antioch. She still sate a Queen and from a golden cup drank sorceries. The kingdom of Heaven was already corrupted and declining in the hearts of men, when an imperial Apostate came to tread the pavements which were consecrated by the feet of Apostles. To dissolute Antioch came the Emperor Julian to winter, prior to his fatal Persian

Expedition. And there the enthusiastic student of ancient philosophy and antiquarian paganism, disgusted to behold what Christianity, degenerated, had to offer ; set a shining example of austere chastity and also made his soldiers abandon wine. Lampooned, of course he was, as every reformer must be, but before he had left the city, he gave to the citizens the example of a new St. Anthony, and did not, either, allow his unsophisticated understanding to part with common sense, humanity and justice, when attacking the problem of a scarcity. He did not accuse his measures of inadequacy or irrationality, but charged the unfortunate issue upon the forestallers and regraters ; and those business wizards, who, out of the empty guts of the starving poor, made fortunes for themselves and their families.

The noble Emperor Julian, miscalled Apostate, digging deep for Grecian statues of Socrates and Plato — was always missing the Diamond of great price, and his spade, mistakenly, scraped the face of Jesus Christ — a most pathetic figure of those days.

It is now time to get some idea of the personality of Paul, who with Barnabas had come to shepherd the nucleus of the future Christian Church, and which in the time of the Emperor Theodosius numbered 100,000.

The following chapter will be devoted to that subject.

CHAPTER XIX.

PAUL'S PERSONALITY.

IN the Acts of the Apostles, after Peter's significant introductions, one personality engrosses the stage. Barnabas we should all like to hear more of, and especially of the second missionary tour to Cyprus, when, as I believe, Mark was able to furnish authentic records of Jesus Christ to Sergius Paulus at Paphos, but Paul, without desiring it, inevitably comes forward to the front and makes colleagues and friends retire. The writer of the Acts—a cultured man of immense merit—is kept out of the record altogether, either by an exaggeration of modesty, or, most likely, by his reverent determination to give to the chief actors their relative importance.

Paul's *personality* had much, undoubtedly, combined with his intellectual pre-eminence, to account for his controlling influence. And yet the records that have come down to us are strangely at variance with what would appear adequate and reasonable to impart impressiveness to his physical aspect and qualities. Friends have been so conquered by the *Apostle* and the *Revealer of Divine secrets*, that they lost sight of him almost altogether as a *man*, while foes, piqued and unpersuaded by him, invented reasons for disparaging his authority.

A contemporary pagan Cynic jibes at Paul's entrance to the third Heaven and adds that his nose was aspiring to go in the same direction—a feat which no Hebrew nose could easily accomplish. But the

friendly Biographer in Hasting's Dictionary and Dean Farrar appear also *biassed*, strange to say, towards the misconception, that the personal aspects of the great Apostle must have been not only insignificant, but repellent.

The present writer is persuaded that these conclusions have been rashly and unwarrantably arrived at, and asks for the candid considerations of the following :—

Paul's stature. *Paulus* was not a description of his stature, for all infants are small. Among the genealogies of the " Little " families in England, there must have been a few giants, and several in the Life Guards. Moreover, Luke has recorded three occasions when Paul's person was the object of injury and capture by excited crowds. (a) The stoning at Iconium, (b) The riot in the Temple, (c) Before the Sanhedrim.

Now it will be in strict accordance with the principle of the economy of miracles, under human probation and the providential administration of the world, to recognise that Paul's escape from these three perils was due to the fact that he was no dwarf, with a lame leg, but one able to stand his ground ; and from being of average height, able to use his arms, instead of being pinioned by the thighs of others. And after being stoned at Iconium, he got up and walked into the city and the next morning undertook a considerable journey. This was the man whose " bodily presence was weak."

It was supposed also that Paul was afflicted by some malady—running eyes or running ears—and an affluvia requiring Cardinal Wolseley's scent bottle. This suggested by a " Thorn in the flesh." Now, how can all this be reconciled with the undoubted fact that of

all the actors in Luke's history none gave such evidence of being a *Persona grata*, when for the first time confronted by strangers ? Centurions, Captains, Prætors, Proconsuls, all are struck at once by Paul's personality and favourably. Felix came to interview him again and again. Festus felt sure it would give pleasure to both King Agrippa and his wife. There was a harmony between the man and his message, both were constraining, never repellent.

Paul's *Hearing* was acute. When before the Sanhedrin, amid no hushed assembly, he caught the whispered contentions between Pharisee and Sadducee which enabled him confidently to throw the apple of discord and to call out with his commanding tones, "It is because of my hope of a resurrection of the dead that I am on my trial." This voice of his, implied no important vacancies among his teeth (notwithstanding the brutal blow ordered to be administered against his mouth), else he would never be distinctly heard, but that voice rang among the hurtling storm, when, also in another storm, he rebuked the officers for discarding his advice against leaving Crete, and yet more impressively when all hope was gone, he exhorted all to take a decent meal, before they committed themselves to the waves. Although his ears were full of sea water when the kind natives appeared, he could discover they were not speaking Greek and were, therefore, "Barbarians." But his *eyes*, his wonderful *eyes* were, after his mouth, the most speaking feature in his face. It has been imagined that his meeting eyebrows gave him the sinister appearance of a Corsican Brigand ! If his brows met, it was to shake hands and swear friendship to Life's end. This brow-beating of Paul has been overdone. The idolaters

of Lystra believed Paul was Mercury, that pleasing diplomatist from Olympus.

No ! The wonderful effect that Paul produced by "fixing his eyes," was because there was a soul behind those windows, aflame with truth and holy zeal, before which pretensions fled and evil sank trembling upon extinction.

Farrar, in his elaborate accusation of Paul's good eyes, builds with strange materials. The blinding vision which produced the conversion, is supposed to have left a lamentable entail, seriously handicapping the Apostle in his Epistolary labours. Now our Lord never did His wonderful miracles in a bungling manner. His cures were perfect. Ananias was sent as the Lord's viceregent, and "scales fell from his eyes," Was the work only half done ? The idea is blasphemous. But it is imagined that Paul "wot not that it was the High Priest." It was not uncommon for the Court to sit under a Proxy, Paul might readily believe that such a brutal order could not proceed from the High Priest. When Eutychus made a noise at the window, and afterwards the shuddering assembly heard the thud of his body, Paul did not call for a light, but ran down stairs in a strange house, lame leg and all, and after the embrace of his vigorous vitality, restoring the youth, this "weak, bodily presence" ran up the stairs again to comfort the brethren, and did not break his shins, for want of either candles or spectacles. But yet again, when all were shivering upon the Strand of Melita and Luke highly commended making a fire, Paul was seen carrying an armful of sticks. Now it betokened uncommon good eyesight to distinguish the dry sticks from the wet, when Melita had been drenched by pitiless rain for weeks. Paul had

been preaching the same sermon, but there is nothing like preaching and practising in one and the same moment.

It has been imagined that Paul's bad eyesight compelled him to employ an amanuensis, and that he was clumsy in forming the Greek letters. This does not comport with his own handwriting in several final exhortations and directions as to discipline. And more important, his compendious summaries of the essential truths he was advocating, he reserved to write by himself. Did he mean to make the most important portions of his messages unintelligible and undecipherable by bad writing through bad eyesight ?

The idea is preposterous, rather we may believe that his anxiety was lest the amanuensis was not writing so well and so clearly as he himself could. Therefore he would make sure of the vital portions.

A far more natural supposition is this. Paul, like most great men, was an economist of time. And discerning that the monotonous labour of the loom did not hinder the compositions of his Epistles, he asked a friend, or hired a Synagogue schoolmaster, to take down what he dictated. Indeed, the concentration upon the manual business, aided his concentration upon his deep theological disquisitions ; although for want of having his previous sentences always before his eyes, the closeness and coherency of the reasoning was impaired, and led to beclouding digressions. This manner of killing two birds by one stone—earning money at the loom and taking up the threads of his arguments against his adversaries, may account for much of Paul's characteristic style. Supposing him dictating his Epistle to the Galatians. He has made preparations for a good piece of tent-making, but look-

ing at last night's work, he finds it is all going wrong, and a lot of it really wants undoing. Yet the beginning was so good. It all reinforces his keen regret and disgust as he calls up the tidings he has received from Galatia. The glorious liberty to which he had introduced those Churches had been fatally tampered with. The true foundations of the new Christian Life had been subtly undermined. The Jewish fetters of legality were being worn by the Free Woman—as ornaments recommending the Bride, the Church, to the Bridegroom! Under the stress of his bitter disappointment, he sets himself at the loom, the amanuensis awaiting his words. The loom goes wrong, like the Churches. Irritated by the obstruction—he is detained and starts again. Before long there is another breakdown, but the Epistle is persevered with, though maledictions arise to his lips against the treacherous machine and yet more emphatically against the false teachers who had undone his splendid work.

The work had been going on smoothly for some time and the luminous and energetic arguments duly developed. With calmness and complacency he draws to a conclusion with both his “stint” and his Epistle, but he shouts out, “Be not deceived, God is not mocked”—and the treadles tremble under his feet—“for whatsoever a man sows that shall he likewise reap. He that sows to the flesh, shall of the same, reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap Life Everlasting. Let us not abate our courage in doing what is right, for in due time we shall reap a reward, if we do not faint. So then, as we have opportunity, let us labour for the good of all, and especially for those who belong to the household of the faith.” But here the Apostle calls to

his amanuensis to "Stop!" as he himself will conclude the Epistle. Leaving his loom and taking up the calamus, he desires to emphasise his deepest convictions. This he will do, as editors, now-a-days, by underlining for bold type the most essential portions of a speech, so will Paul write in "large letters" (Πηλίκη γράμμασι) Gal. vi., ii.

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a renewed nature." And all who shall regulate their lives by that principle may peace and mercy be given to them, and to the true Israel of God. "From this time onward let no one trouble me, for as for me, I bear, branded on my body, the scars of Jesus as my Master."

Having disposed, as I think, of Dean Farrar's "thorn," I offer the suggestion that Paul was afflicted by *stammering*, not habitually, far from it, but when subject to weakness, through hardships or attacks of influenza. When called upon to exercise his Apostolic office and especially when bearing testimony to Jesus Christ crucified and risen again, Paul knew neither weakness nor fear and his powerful pleadings made Felix tremble and Agrippa almost persuaded. The promise given by his Lord was, on these indicated occasions, amply fulfilled. But there were other occasions when he was designedly left to experience the weakness of bodily infirmity, so that God might be magnified and His human instrument made ever dependent. Paul felt it keenly, when reaching the Churches of Galatia, he found himself really unable to expound the glad tidings in an effective manner,

half prostrated by influenza, and his infirmity of stammering quite uncontrollable. But it becomes not the messengers of salvation to withhold the message because they are not at ease or full of power. It is for them to subdue reluctance and awaken resolution to suffer and endure, and to brave the scorn and contempt of opposers, if by any means some may be saved. And though Paul's bodily presence was necessarily weak, and his stammering speech invoked contempt, he was not to be debarred from availing his opportunity. His stumbling attempts even excited his auditors to greater attention. His $\chi-\chi-\chi$ became $\chi\acute{\alpha}\rho\iota\varsigma$, his $\pi-\pi-\pi$ became $\pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$, his 'ava-ava-ava became 'anástasis . So that the joyful tidings so worked finally upon the deriders that they were ready to give their eyes to become possessors of the like faith that the Apostle enjoyed.

But when the good seed had fallen upon the good ground, Paul was upon his knees before his Maker. Why was he not aided as aforetime before the tribunals? The sheep were hungry and athirst and the great opportunity was lost through human infirmity. So the complaining Apostle pursued the throne of grace with importunities, that this grievous thorn of the flesh might depart from him. The answer was, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Yes! God's grace, availing for both physical infirmity and moral. While Paul was still under the tent of his mortal tabernacle he was not allowed to forget the passions which grace overcame and the temptations which fell away before the glory of the Cross. The Roman Catholic expositions appear to have been engrossed by carnal conceptions of the thorn. But while that would be an

unworthy aspersion, it would be well not to dismiss *entirely* their misconceptions.

To provide water for the city of Liverpool, the Corporation acquired a lake in North Wales. The adjacent shores were bordered by several parish church-yards. To dam the streams and enlarge the area of the submerged tract, the bodies were reverently removed and the churchyards cemented. Now, a great enlargement of Heavenly influences. Less of earth and more of Heaven is reflected where formerly was corruption. Liverpool knows that the water is pure. Heaven's plentiful rains of Compassion love to fall on that reservoir. But who knows, when looking down those crystal depths, if that tiny staggering bubble which finally reaches the surface and bursts may not have issued from a crack in the cement ?

Angels, nevertheless are ready to drink it, for Paul had died to sin, and by the sufficient grace of God, his thorns of the flesh of all kinds are hindrances no more.

CHAPTER XX.

ANTIOCH (CONTINUED).

So we now can see more clearly what sort of man the Apostle Paul was. Though Barnabas took him in hand at Antioch, the positions were reversed after and during the first Cyprian journey.

No weakling depending upon the benevolent bulk of Barnabas, but one who had had already great experience in making converts, having been nigh fourteen years at it—an old hand—before ever they had promenaded together the long Spanish *paseo* and made knots of motlêy passers by stop and list awhile, and some would come secretly in the evening to know what the glad news meant. A whole year of happy fellowship! More than once the earth trembled and looked as if it wanted to swallow up the guilty masquers, or belike spur them into the Orontes. It rumbled and made its protest—a fevered world tossing from side to side. And astonished Pagans, who got no evangel from their votive offerings, stopped to hear of a coming King, Whose rule would transform the nations and usher in the Golden Age. Death buried without resurrection and Life risen and guaranteed for ever. This astonishing message compelled the Antiochese to list. And the approach of the Judgment Day was so sure as death itself. Yes! While they spake, the walls would begin to rock, statues begin to tumble from their pedestals and the affrighted populace gather on the heights. The Apostles—ever under Angel guardianship—would

follow the people, Paul raising his voice and using words he had written in Arabia. "See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh, for if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from Heaven, Whose voice then shook the earth, but now He hath promised, saying, 'Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also Heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.'" (Hebrews xii. 25—29.)

If fourteen years of ceaseless, but unrecorded Evangelism must be credited to St. Paul in Damascus, Arabia, and the provinces adjacent to Tarsus, the much shorter period of the sojourn in Antioch, of the Apostles Barnabas and Paul, must nevertheless have appeared to both of them a long and deeply fruitful preparation. They were in a new city, under new circumstances, and engaged in the entirely novel enterprise of founding and organizing a new religion, absolutely foreign, and in its nature acutely differing from all the reigning superstitions of the world. Under such circumstances moments become years, and to, perhaps, Paul the two years at Cæsarea and those at Rome may have been shorter than those vivid months of Antiochian stone laying.

Antioch, too, was just the representative of what Paganism could and could not do for humanity, apart from a Divine revelation.

Its social base was the gross crime of slavery and upon it leisure and largess became the rights of the freed citizens. Even Julian acknowledged that the sustenance of his people was the special province of a sovereign, but he could not see his way out of the problem, otherwise than by the denial to all natural rights and privileges to the majority.

Christianity came to enfranchise the whole human family. Millions might lift their hands in chains, but their hearts realized an unassailable freedom, and the bitterest yoke that men could impose was snapped by the simple acceptance of the Lordship of Christ. To give actuality to things future, as well as spiritual exaltation, Christianity preached the positive and unchallengeable truth of a physical resurrection and the Eternal Life, in which master and slave should join in crowning the Liberator of the Race.

A resurrection to judgment was not less explicitly proclaimed ; and the certainty of crimes against God and humanity incurring a due recompense of reward, vindicated the Divine justice, while it urged acceptance of mercy through the Ransomer and Absolver.

The civilizations of the East and the West united in this capital city to expose the worthlessness of both. In their heart of hearts the Antiochians were weary and disgusted with life. The most fortunate of them were only refined animals, whom Daphne pronounced fools : and who paced the long promenade, porticoed and statue lined, knowing that, however shade might be chequered occasionally by sun, at the end of life's journey there remained the everlasting darkness of the grave, whose only flash was the gleam of an avenging sword ! Pause ! Pause ! poor Antiochians. Two strangers are speaking, and a knot is gathering. Even

a heavily laden slave has stopped without depositing his burden. He hears. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

The Jew usurer and the Gentile slave owner are alike arrested. They pause, and the clown, the charioteer and the gladiator augment the crowd, until the Lictors also are added to the group; and before it is dispersed, seeds have been deposited, as birds plant woods, and the Church at Antioch grew -- for the soil was hungry.

Now let us revert to the authentic records of how the Christian Church began. After the Triune God, fully manifested at Pentecost, it would seem that neither Peter nor Paul, but Stephen should be credited as the actual founder and chief propagator of the blessed Evangel. It was the power of Stephen's preaching that so stirred up the hierarchy that it readily listened to Paul's urgent entreaties to give him power to persecute to death the hateful sect which threatened the fulfilments of the Abrahamic promise. Then when Paul became chief inquisitor, his raging zeal scattered the infant Church, which was driven in various directions to Phœnicia, Cyprus and Antioch, delivering the message in the first instance to none but Jews. But some of them were Cypriotes and Cyrenians, who, on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenistic Jews and to the Greeks also and told them the good news concerning the Lord Jesus. The power of the Lord was with them, and there were a vast number who believed and turned to the Lord. Then,

when tidings of this reached the ears of the Church at Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas as far as Antioch. "On getting there he was delighted to see the grace which God had bestowed, and he encouraged them all to remain, with fixed resolve, faithful to the Lord. For he was a good man and was full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and the number of believers in the Lord greatly increased." It is clear that if we desired to commemorate the first founders of Christianity, the principal names have not fully come down to us. We have enshrined the Apostles on the West front of many Cathedrals, in porches and in Parish pulpits, and Barnabas has not been omitted, but of the earliest, and probably the most suffering, we have no records. It is fitting for the nobility of heroes that oblivion should roll over their names.

In the immeasurably inferior department of the world's progress—modern civilization—a crowd of inventors and improvers will ever remain unrecognised. The clever engine fitter or apprentice suggests a new device. It is brought to the notice of the chief constructor, its value perceived, and a few shillings may reward the artizan, while the firm patent the discovery. The patent, perhaps, jogs the stock exchange and creates fortunes for brokers; but the firm, for want of Tariff Reform, gets into bankruptcy, and the wife of the inventor appears before the Board of Guardians.

It is the Innominata who bless the world, but here and there we pick up a wreath that has been thrown away and should rightly be brought back to adorn the brows of a real benefactor. If I mistake not it was the late Isaac Holden, M.P., an honourable employer of labour, who in early days discovered that matches,

dipped in phosphorus, might with great advantage supersede flint and steel. He did not consider that his highest duty in life was to make money, but passed on the notion to a struggling chemist, who, I believe, made something out of it, while the original inventor made no claim. This incomparable invention, which has rescued from the clutches of Time myriads of moments, formerly lost in the vain effort to get light, and has ministered more comfort, more convenience and more material wealth than all the mines of Golconda (for Time is money), was made a present to the world without compensation.

The invention had its tragic sequel in the injuries inflicted upon the "hands" employed, who when kept awake at night by acute phossy jaw could wish the inventor had never been born. Nor can the wretched match-box makers be more grateful, whose 2½d. per gross cannot keep them from slipping into the grave. *That* though is the fault of "*business*" and the want of Tariff Reform—not of the inventor—who ought to be placed in a Pantheon. His merit might move the hearts of flint and steel, and evoked at least a spark of gratitude.

But Avaunt! horrible modern "civilization!" The bright streets of Antioch are before us, with its slaves, who were never required to earn phossy jaw, and walk erect, noble in gait, unmaimed, uncrippled, unwounded and not stunted and disfigured, or suffering from trade diseases as Great Britain's industrial workers do. We are considering the *Light of the World* the light that never shone on land or sea and the illumination of the Pagan nations in regard to the unknown future. And as we think of the light which bridged the gulf between time and eternity we wonder if the

circumstances of the people this side of Eternity have been improved by the new Evangel, if the few happy death beds are an adequate recompense for the seas of blood, which carrying the Cross as a battle cry, has occasioned ? There could be no question about the answer, if material progress had not insisted upon marching *pari passu* with Christianity. Material progress is always inimical to spiritual progress, what feeds the former starves the latter. Our precious modern civilisation is doomed.

Lithe, straight and stalwart, the Antiochians paced the ways of their bright metropolis. "If we are only insects of a larger growth," they may have thought, "let us disport ourselves upon the wing, while the sun shines; our companions in swarms encourage us." But sprinkled among the careless crowd are a few of the Nazarenes—the fruit of Paul's persecution. A voice is heard speaking, and the idle and leisured class and the unemployed stop to hearken. "Man is not a creature," crushed like a moth, he is higher than your gods, he is the Son and Heir of the Highest, if you will only receive it; and the Highest is hungering to number you among His Holy Family. The Highest has sent His Son to show how you can be lifted up to fellowship with Himself and become co-heirs of all things. But you have been defacing every trace of your high origin. Your sins make you loathsome to the Supreme, and you have been busy with tearing up your Title Deeds. Hearken now! The Most High God has come down in the person of His own dear Son. He is the Messiah, predicted by all the Prophets of the Jews, and He came to do His Father's will and finally to offer Himself a Sacrifice for the sins of the world.

Accept Him ! and your sins are washed away by His blood. Accept Him ! and your forfeited title deeds are restored to you. Let His love for you upon the Cross quicken yours, and you will gradually grow into the mind and heart and will of the Holy Son of God, our Saviour. We are able, from our acquaintance with Him and from having seen and felt Him, after He had risen from the dead, to give you proof that He is the Redeemer of the World. Moreover, after His sin offering was accomplished, and after He had risen from the dead, He and His Father shed forth His Holy Spirit, of which we have also been witnesses, and have been endowed with gifts to withstand our Adversary, the Devil, and claim our title to mansions in the skies. The Holy Spirit which testifies to Jesus Christ, remains in the world to move men's hearts towards allegiance and love. Admit Him ! as He now is knocking at your hearts and you will become sick of sin and turn from all lying vanities to the living God. Repent and Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, and you Antiochians may become sharers of His Eternal Life.

Sick from the circus—cursing the groves of Daphne. The Antiochians stand, pause, consider, and an emotion siezes them that never possessed them before. They heed, credit and espouse the faith of the story told in simplicity by the mouths of no self-seeking preachers.

To become Sons of God ! They hang their heads in shame. A warm hand is slipped into theirs, and the attentive listener is invited to come to their meeting place. "We shall meet for worship this evening and you will be further instructed." Thus a great number who had learnt to believe came over

to the Lord's side. Before the tidings reached the Church at Jerusalem ; before Barnabas was sent thither, and before the great Tarsian was discovered and before he with Barnabas stood together in the streets of the Queen of the East, Antioch began to hold the cup of her sorceries with a shaking hand.

At this time, when Caligala was continuing his fooleries, and Matthew was busy writing his Gospel, certain Prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch, one of whom, named Agabus, being instructed by the Spirit, publicly predicted the speedy coming of a great famine throughout the world. It came in the reign of Claudius, for the reign of his predecessor was cut short by assassination after four years. Then the disciples decided to send relief, every one in proportion to his means, to the brethren living in Judæa. This they did, forwarding their contributions to the Elders by Barnabas and Saul. How do our Sceptics account for this prediction and its literal and exact fulfilment ?

Why Judea should be the general beggar and carry round the bag to the infant communities in Asia is hard to understand. No greater stigma could justly attach to the Jewish ecclesiastical system of that day than the fact that the wealthiest religious corporation in the world allowed its own members to starve and require the alms of distant proselytes. I doubt that the proscription was made on religious grounds. It was on account of the general disregard to the claims of the poor, on the part of the highly placed and plundering Priesthood during this especially corrupt period. Jerusalem was simply rolling in riches, by reason of the sacrificial system, and the capital during the Festivals was crammed by

visitors and worshippers ; all of them, by Levitical obligation, compelled to send the river Pactolus sweeping through the corridors and surrounding the Altars of the ever grasping Priesthood.

When the scarcity arrived, one would have thought they would have sent messages, in decency, to say that no contributions from proselytes, home or foreign, were looked for. But it was the case of our Lord's parable. The poor of Jerusalem, assaulted and wounded by the predicted famine, the Priest and the Levite passed on the other side, and the Good Samaritans of Asia, who never had the great opportunities that Jerusalem regularly enjoyed, were left to come to the rescue.

Paul's hands were the sorer for it, but he had had so many strokes on his back already that it never occurred to him to complain. On the contrary, he urged everybody to work the harder ; to send a good offering to the neglected poor of Jerusalem, where the Chief Priests were surfeited with riches.

But we return to ask, how do the Rationalists explain this appearance of Agabus—only one of a number of prophets, commissioned and enabled to predict with historical certainty the great scarcity in the reign of Claudius ? This would have been a fine opportunity to wreck the fortunes of the new religion, by exposing how the new Prophets egregiously failed in regard to everything they had foretold. But unfortunately for their expectant enemies the issue hoped for was accurately the opposite. Every detail came to pass and in the predicted time announced.

The Apostles had no misgivings all through, and the groups of believers began forthwith to lay up

week by week to be ready to meet the expected occasion. A few, perhaps, might wish that their savings might be spared them, even at the cost of the non-verification, but the verification did come with unerring certainty. God is not slack concerning either His promises or His threatenings.

Now this is important, because it occurred in the Christian age of miracles. Deny miracles and say it was the simplicity of the unscientific spectators that made them credible, and you are confronted by the miracle of prophecy.

The history of St. Luke is generally accepted as faithful and true. Agabus did publicly proclaim everywhere that the famine was coming and the miracle of its fulfilment was vindicated by contemporaries, and subsequently confirmed by scholars and historians. But nothing is so absurd but the Rationalists can swallow it. The gift of prophecy exists to-day, possessed, not by the Baxterites or the Cummingites, but by obscure men such as founded the Christian Church at Antioch, who handed down to posterity no other name but Christ.

Another historical miracle comes to pass aptly at this juncture. The historian transfers us from Antioch to Jerusalem. King Herod (grandson of Herod the Great) arrested certain members of the Church to curry favour with the hierarchy, and he beheaded James, John's brother. The glorious Apostle so specially favoured to witness, with Peter and John, supreme manifestations of Our Lord's miraculous power, drops out of history—silently withdraws, even as the High Priest passes to the Holy of Holies and we see him no more. Finding that this gratified the Jews, he proceeded to seize

Peter also: these being the days of unleavened bread. Herod Agrippa was determined to preserve his popularity. Innocence or guilt was not the question, but what was politic. The hierarchy was perpetually assailing the ear of the King who from Claudius had acquired the reconstituted Kingdom of his grandfather and urging that the Nazarenes menaced that eminently profitable Dominion, handed down from Moses.

Yes! Policy was to be listened to. Was it not the god of Fortune which assisted his steps to the throne? So, having beheaded James and reaping one sheaf of popularity, he proceeded to acquire another by procuring Peter's execution. Then he would be doubly sure and his Dominion would outlast his predecessor's. What a pity that another Agabus was not at hand to warn him. He was away at Antioch. But take every care, Oh, you immaculate High Priest, to remove every leaven of malice and wickedness. Don't let a particle of ferment enter your gullet, especially when you enter the King's chamber to whisper in his ear.

The King will haplessly hear and give order to lodge Peter in jail, handing him over to the care of sixteen soldiers! and intending after the Passover to bring him out again to the people. No doubt to execute him. So "man proposes and God disposes." Peter was kept in prison, but long and fervent prayer was offered to God by the Church on his behalf. That marplot was the prayer meeting. The great State Measure was maturing and Herod expected the same brilliant results as from his stroke against James. One could almost pity him! Who, thinks he, are those canting Nazarenes to stand in the way

of his divine will ! Oh ! if he could have heard their Ohs and Ahs and Amens at their absurd prayer meeting, it might have lent zest to his supper. " But, Attendant ! Is this unleavened ? " " No, Sire ! " " Then bring me the other, if you want to keep your head upon your shoulders."

Agrippa sleeps pleasantly — all goes so prosperously. Peter is to be brought out to-morrow for public execution. The Devil administered to him nice opium pills. But Peter slept still better, although he was bound with two chains, between two soldiers, and guards were on duty outside the door !

Suddenly an Angel of the Lord stood by him and a light shone in the cell. The Angel struck Peter on the side and roused him with the words, " Get up, quickly." The chains dropped from his wrists and then the Angel said, " Put on your girdle and sandals." When Peter had done so, the Angel added, " Throw your cloak round you and follow me." Peter followed him out, not knowing that what was happening under the Angel's guidance was real, but thinking that he was seeing a vision. Passing the first guard, and then the second, they came to the iron gate leading into the city, which opened to them of itself ; and when they had passed through that, and had walked along one street, all at once the angel left him. Then Peter came to himself and said : Now I know beyond all doubt that the Lord has sent his Angel and has rescued me from Herod's hands, and from all that the Jewish people have been expecting.

As soon as he realised what had happened, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was also known as Mark, where a number of people were gathered together, praying. On his knocking

at the door in the gate, a maidservant, named Rhoda, came to answer it. She recognised Peter's voice, but in her joy left the gate unopened, and ran in and told them that Peter was standing outside. "You are mad!" they exclaimed. But when she persisted that it was so, they said, "It must be his spirit." Meanwhile Peter went on knocking, and when they opened the gate and saw him, they were amazed. Peter signed to them with his hand to be silent, and then told them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison, adding: "Tell James and the Brethren all this." Then he left them and went to another place (Acts xii. 7-17, Twentieth Century N.T., and Weymouth).

When morning came, there was no little commotion among the soldiers as to what could have possibly become of Peter. And when Herod had had him searched for and could not find him; after sharply questioning the guards, he ordered them away to execution. He then went down from Judæa to Cæsarea and remained there.

Soon the worms had their work to do, being commissioned and obedient to God, and Herod's spirit was conveyed to its appointed place. I wonder how many was the guard composed of whom Herod ordered to be executed for failing to withstand the Delivering Angel's power. Did their spirits—four or sixteen—look into Herod's face, worms and all, as he was conducted to the shades below? He had attendants and unleavened Justice there!

At this juncture the writer of this book fell asleep and dreamed. He saw the world as it was in the ages before man had appeared. Africa and Australia were submerged: in greater part, Arabia, Russia

and Central Asia were scarcely above the waves. Points of Cumberland and the Malvern Hills were lonely rocks and the Highlands of Scotland were Lowlands. The troubles of Erin had not arisen to dismay and confound Liberal Legislators and before Lloyd George was born there were spitfires at Criccieth and Snowdon.

The Plesiosauris, the Iguanodon and other misshapen monsters roared and lashed in the brine, and the white foam upon rocky shores was dashed with the blood of brutal contests.

Those beasts reared their horrid forms and at night seemed to carry away a portion of the stars when they swung their necks and legs. There also the Pterodactyl spread its wing, and when rising, shut off constellations in the East and by the other wing shut off other constellations in the West. It was an age of monsters, and the horror of it slowly passed away.

By-and-bye came on a softer scene, and a race of apes believed itself at the pinnacle of perfected animal creation. Those apes believed themselves to be the aim of evolution, and no higher organisms were to dominate the planet. After them nothing could possibly supervene.

I heard their chatter in the Amazonian forest. It was a glorious evening. The sun had put on a tiara of rubies and shot his crimson arrows through the close green copses—shooting them high and higher as he sank, until the last sprays of twig and leaf looked black at a smiling moon.

Then arose the voice of the baboons. "So listen to the accents of wisdom. Guard your tails and never allow them to grow less."

He was swinging from a lofty bough and had his appendage firmly twisted; from which coin of advantage he, in a meditative manner, swung backwards and forwards. It assisted him in his reflections, as it now does some Cabinet Ministers when they are in the wood.

“Observe,” continued the baboon, “the animal races have attained to the summit of perfection. WE are now the dominant race. The drama of creation closes with the apes in the ascendant. Our pride and our ornament are our tails. By them we can climb the dizziest heights, make them straight or crooked, and never fear falling upon our feet or our heads. Our heads, you will observe, are not so remarkable; we cannot stand upon our heads, neither can we understand. But our *tails*, which have come down from our ancestors, are true tails, and any member of our *genus* bringing with him a different, a new, or (pretending to be) a superior tail should be promptly put to death.

“Furthermore, as I am getting old, I want to speak to you in the warning tones of a sage. We had amongst us a young monkey who asserted that it would be well if our tails were cut off, and what was the consequence? He had a great fall. And not being able to rise so high in the world as the others, he took to star gazing. Now that habit is fatal. The proper object of contemplation is the ground. Let yourselves drop and study the ground. Set your affections upon the things below, not above. Rise as high as you can, but never believe that nuts fall down from Heaven. If a nut is presented to you as from above—a new fact—called, I believe, a ‘miracle.’ If you cannot crack it, then throw it away. You

can be sure there is nothing in it. WE know what we know. There are no nuts anywhere except those that are grown in our forest. And as for those young monkeys who pretend that they can crack those nuts which fall from Heaven, and that they are sweet and nourishing and give strength and vision—don't believe them for a moment. You will know them by their tails, which are *non est*."

The sage then closed his eyes and a group of admiring parrakeets, as green as green, who were taking in everything, echoed in chorus, "You will know them by their tails."

Here I awoke, and began to wonder whether man had really come to be the dominant race, and that the ape dynasty had come to an end.

CHAPTER XXI.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

“THE Word of God grew and multiplied. And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark. Now there were in the Church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers ; as Barnabas and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said : Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away ” (Acts xii. 24—25 ; xiii. 1—3).

Happy was that Church at Antioch which possessed Prophets and Teachers, and also praying and fasting men, who prevailed to wrest a blessing upon its Messengers.

The three great nations who were called to plant the Christian Church were represented in Barnabas, the Jew, Lucius a Hellenistic Proselyte, and Manaen, doubtless a Roman, educated with the two Herods, Antipas and Archelaus. “Greek cultivation and Roman polity prepared man for Christianity.” And now this favoured Church has been silenced by Moslem power for 1,300 years. And the Christian Powers have confederated to uphold that desolating and cruel tyranny, which still blights the most

favoured regions of Europe and Asia. Assuredly Christendom will be made to bear the penalty.

Let us turn from the painful reflection and now consider the mission party, designated, anointed, and sent to undertake the Holy Spirit's bidding.

Paul, we know, an old hand at preaching, though no records have come to us, Barnabas, who impoverished himself, in surrendering land to the community, and John Mark, the young disciple whose invaluable Gospel is deemed to be prior to the other three, and for facts was the foundation of the Synoptists.

Barnabas ranked as a "Prophet," Saul as a "Teacher," but that secondary place was combined with the first place of all—his Apostleship. Without doubt the Holy Spirit conveyed to the Missionaries the route that they were to take. Barnabas, a native of the Island, may have been the first to suggest Cyprus, and Paul, who, in his frequent sea passages to and from Jerusalem ever preserved his premonitory persuasions regarding his destined action upon it, perceived the fulfilment of his predetermined career. It is not for man to direct his steps.

How happy and confident that mission band, sent out by the Holy Spirit ! Unlike those worldlings who go by their own lights, or trimmed by reputed wise counsellors, "shrewd men." Christian enterprise has no place for the "shrewd" man. He is usually a born scamp and yet that kind readily get into certain Diaconites.

They were told to go to Cyprus. Curious how islands are favoured. The monks of old could not resist islands. Almost every island within reach of the mainland was an object of desire. And archæolo-

gists (an unhappy family) revel in disputes over the use and meaning of ruins, respecting which the rabbits often know as much as the Savants.

But going behind the Druids, lately the most wonderful discoveries have been made in Crete, which, like Cyprus, was linked to and faced Europe, Asia and Africa. The missing link between the crude Art and Architecture of Egypt and the perfection reached in Greece formed a problem which recently received partial solution. Cretan civilisation presents the middle stages of the progressive arts in antiquity. The island imported what Egypt had originated and brought towards Grecian perfection what the Dynasty of Cretan Kings was pleased to adopt and mature. The sanitation of the Palace at the Capital anticipated the English methods which Berlin and the rest of Europe is slowly copying. It would be strange if Cyprus should not have taken a course similar to Crete. Cyprus had a dynasty of Kings, and Ethiopians which supplied the slave class, for without slavery no civilisation ever arises or remains. The day when the manumission of slaves, white and black, is consummated, will be one where the "simple life" will rule, and the pride and pomp of circumstance of wealth and power will neither create nor reward the adepts of the *Fine arts*. Luxury will be regarded as a barbarism, and exquisite nourishments to the senses, a very inferior diet for immortal man.

No spade has been driven far beneath the surface of Cyprus as yet; but we must be glad that our Beaconsfield rescued a small portion of the Moslem Empire and made it British, which should invite Archæologist Evans to go to Cyprus and do there

what he has done so splendidly in Crete. Doubtless he would find that Cyprus also supplied a halfway house on the way to Athenian glories.

But we are concerned now with greater glories than those. The Artificers of man's soul are on board. Chrysostom, Athanasius, and Leighton have yet to be heard. Christendom is bobbing up and down in the harbour of Seleucia, and John Mark is wondering whether he is Stoic enough to stand the sea voyage. I don't suppose though that he ever heard that Zeno the Stoic was born in a humble village in Cyprus, and after teaching 58 years in Athens, and living to the age of 98, and having hurt his big toe on a stone, his stoicism gave way, and he killed himself in despair after delivering his last lecture.

Conybeare and Howson say that "It is not necessary, though quite allowable, to suppose that this particular course (making for the island of Cyprus) was divinely indicated in the original revelation at Antioch." We beg pardon of the reverend authors and deem it marvellous that they should question it. They might as well imagine that the landing of Julius Cæsar at Pevensey, thus founding the greatest Empire that the world has yet seen, occurred through a "wise discretion" on the part of the Roman General simply. Let us believe, if we have Christian sanity, that nothing "happens," everything is ordained.

It is therefore that when as often Paul saw the summits of Cyprus, and he felt that he was to know those mountains again (though the ship was not carrying the cross for the first time*), he was not at

* Acts xi. 19, 20.

all surprised that the Spirit entered the minds of the Missionaries and gave them the "wise discretion" to go to Cyprus and nowhere else, on peril of their immortal souls.

It is scarcely likely that the Apostles went by water to Seleucia. The windings of the Orontes are so tortuous that over 40 miles would have to be traversed instead of 16 miles by land. If, however, the former mode of transit was selected, the irritating windings of the muddy stream would present a scene of rocky picturesqueness—the bluffs of the Wye on a larger scale. Arrived at Salamis, the trading ship would be moored to piers of Roman construction. Massive stones, some of them 20ft. long, by 5 or 6 wide, fastened by iron cramps, attest the magnitude of engineering operations, usual in antiquity, before steam was known, but slavery not unknown.

The eyes of Barnabas and of Mark would be familiar with the enormous water works connected with clearing the Harbour, also with the handsome Gate of Antioch and the immense fortress, where was the tomb of the founder of his Dynasty. And the vessel clearing itself from the merchantmen, and the coasting vessels, laden with the rich produce of Cyprus, whose packings, shreds, peelings, and garbage dotted the surface of the now clearing waters, would stand at length right out to sea, enabling the voyagers to scan the whole bay on the left, the lowlands sopping into the marge, the wild and woody country rising behind it, and finally Mount Casius, lifting itself from the edge of the sea to a height of above 5,000 feet.

Barnabas and Mark would nudge and shake him, but Paul's back was to the panorama, though Aureas might have strewed gold upon it. His face was to

his work, to the places and the persons whom he was predestined to meet—predestined before the foundations of the world. Besides, when St. Paul was deeply moved, could not speak, He gazed and whispered only to God—his thanks and joy.

Here at length—*Salamis*, quite a great city, a spacious harbour, numerous synagogues, an active and prosperous population, broad and fruitful fields behind, and finally hills, borrowing azure from the Heavens.

So he was at last, with souls waiting at Heaven's gate, which *he* was to unlock and none but he. We are told nothing about it. But that the Messengers of Antioch did not delay to deliver their embassy is certain. The pious Jews would welcome the strangers. They would be given opportunity to speak, would make the Staggering Evangel, would divide the assemblies into hostile camps, certain among them would receive the truth into their souls, and be born again, as was decreed before the foundations of the world.

The Apostles, led by the spirit, made for the seat of government. It was the natural procedure, and throughout the Old Testament people were reached through their Rulers.

A young Saul and David, a young Solomon and Josiah, an old Hezekiah brought to their Kingdoms Reformation, security and peace, while Jeroboam, Ahab and Manasseh made them sin.

When Heaven is meaning to bless the earth with showers, the highest pinnacles must receive the first drops; then the slopes hasten to carry the benison to the vales. The State is a Divine thing and Kingly authority—reflecting, however travestied,

the Rule of the Universe, is to be revered as the instrument most capable of exerting influence on the largest scale.

As a regimen for communities, Autocracy, given a model ruler, is to be preferred above any devices of Representative Parliaments. It is only because Kings are mortal, while the people are always with us, that we have to put up with the "second best" form of Government.

The Spirit taught the missionaries that to establish the Church it was right and expedient to catch the ear of the earthly ruler as the readiest and most successful means of influencing the people.

Paul, who was called especially to stand before Kings, took the lead doubtless in this determination. He inspired his colleagues to go to Paphos, where the Proconsul held his Court and administered the Civil Province. It was like Paul, always burning to attack the strongholds.

There was a sanctuary and a worship to which men resorted to become *Unholy*. The pure foam of the sea, caressing the shore near Paphos, gave birth to Venus, who has ruled Pagan minds ever since. On, then, to Paphos! Paul would fly a hawk and bring down a Roman eagle. A hundred miles they had to go, much of it on Roman Government, and thanks to that divine thing—a State—they were not robbed and murdered on the way.

And they had no "Bibles," or Tracts to carry; possibly St. Matthew's Gospel was becoming current, possibly not. But they had Moses and the Prophets—other testimony was wrapt up in themselves.

The Kingdom of Heaven on earth was badly wanted. Claudius was a respectable Emperor at

this time, but the shameless vice of his wife made his Court a bye-word. He had to kill her—ought to have done it long before. Then he married a widow, who poisoned him to get her son Nero promoted! On to Paphos, then, dropping a tear for Claudius, who before he allowed himself to be ruled by a woman, visited our shores and at Rome spared Caractacus.

It was a bad time for the Western Powers—for the Roman Empire. For, at the same era when the King of the Jews and of the Universe was ascending to His throne on High, the East which sent us the Star of Hope and Deliverance was busy also flooding every seat of Government with Eastern professors of magic, astrology, necromancy, fortune telling, and the black art.

Every UnChristian Governor had his Eastern Fraud, sitting at tables of luxury, and whispering counsels and interpreting auguries. The most wise, the most skilful, the most experienced Rulers submitted their cultivated intellects to be poisoned and misdirected by the preposterous Mountebanks who knew nothing except the way to do the devil's work. What real unquestionable gifts did the East ever bring to the West, with the Almighty exceptions, Judaism and Christianity? From the same source came the Moslem hordes, created by the greatest Imposter of all.

When Octavius had given highways to and from the East comparatively free from brigandage and piracy, and that as a consequence commerce and intercourse sprang up, it was as if another Moses had flung dust in the air and a strong wind from the East blew incessantly upon every throne, carrying on its wings soothsayers, magicians, etc., etc. The

vacancy in the heart of pagan men was acutely felt, and when those Pretenders had no other credential than that they came from the East, the land of magic and mystery, *faut mieux*, let them come in. They brought with them the worship of Astarte, Cybele, Isis, and nameless abominations. In fact, it would seem that the Gates of Heaven and Hell were opened simultaneously, and angels and demons raced each other to be first to get the ear of every authority. That was when the Temple of Janus was closed. But, Oh, Heaven! what another war was opened everywhere! Good and Evil were in deadly grips in the Augustan Age and after.

On, then, to Paphos! to purify the sea foam of those parts, where men may be shown Him Who walked upon the waves on an ocean of love and forgiveness.

Paul marches steadily on. Mark is thinking about writing his Gospel, but will not do it until some twenty years later. Meantime, on to Paphos—to banish the Eastern Frauds who are to be found in most Governors' Palaces. To bring light, guidance and spiritual power so that the Civil Ruler may possess the elementary qualifications of ruling well, in the fear of God and the love of man.

Sergius Paulus, the Governor, the missionaries found, had already got his black cat at his ear. One, Elymas, the Sorcerer, an Arabian Jew. And although the man of mystery had planted lies and frauds already, the Proconsul had an open mind and was ready to hear about the *new religion*. What credential, however, could the missionaries bring so exceptionally convincing as a miracle? It was a case where miracle was necessary and Paul felt

he had within him the power to speak his *fiat* and that the miraculous *fact* would appear. It is, indeed, pathetic to think of great populations and a wonderful Empire, like others that preceded it, being left without any authoritative and Divine Light, apart from the flickering conscience which the Devil's breath seeks to extinguish.

In the want of one unchallengeable voice, attested by miracle, Sergius Paulus sat daily in the seat of judgment and looked around and within, wondering if the gods would be propitious and aid him to rule in the fear of Heaven and execute true justice and judgment. He would seek aid from any promising source. There was amid his counsellors one who seemed possessed of mysterious powers, and he has been admitted to his confidence, but he is increasingly doubtful and suspicious, haunted by the apprehension that this sorcerer was not a voice from the Highest. His mind, however, was an open and candid one and he would give audience to any who announced that they were the bearers of new and precious Truth, which should the better enable him to discharge his duties for the happiness of his Province.

One glance of the spirit-possessed man and Elymas quailed. He foresaw his reign of evil influence was already over. Paul was fitted by nature to stand before Kings, was a *persona grata* in all circles and in the highest. Agrippa's wife was bent upon seeing the mysterious Jew, and brought a number of court ladies to watch the flashing of his wonderful eyes, for Ananias at Damascus did nothing by halves. And what a voice! Paul had caught its accents from the third Heaven, to which he was not seldom wafted. He could coo like a dove and anon make

the hinds to calve. Among the keen and curious Athenians, he at once attracted attention. Instead of turning away from the street talker, they took hold of him. "You must give us all you know; we want to hear more. Come unto our hall. Now from the Forum address us as long as you like."

The daft historians have been engaged upon carving a Punchinello, with a lame leg, simply because when entering Galatia he persisted in preaching under influenza.

Paul preached and Sergius Paulus heard. But as often as the herald spake, Elymas interposed, poisoning the ear of his patron with whispered contradictions. So finding that his adversary was robbing him of a great opportunity, a Divine direction within him bade him wield the sword of judgment. Fixing his magical eyes upon the sorcerer, he said, "Oh, full of all subtlety and all mischief, Thou child of the Devil, Thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season."

Instantly there fell upon him a mist and a darkness, and he went feeling about for some one to guide him. Then the Governor, seeing what had happened, believed, being struck with amazement at the teaching of the Lord. (Acts xiii. 10—12).

That one act, that one miracle, did more to purify the Courts of Justice and bless the peasants of Cyprus than a successful rebellion against the diversion of the straight paths of the Lord. Oh, for more Pauls, seated at the ear of governors! But what a large mingling of mercy with judgment! "for a season" only, when the colliers,

without being sorcerers, are deprived of the sun for half the year.

But the impression made upon John Mark was that "we are wanting in a compendious story of Jesus. Paul cannot be everywhere with his persuasive oratory and his power of miracle. We need a Gospel tract to circulate among the Western nations, and feel that the work I had meditated should be pursued constantly and brought to the earliest completion possible. Peter was my chief informant. From him I have put down the most accurate narratives of what Jesus said and did, other and various eye and ear witnesses it is possible to get, but chiefly at Jerusalem and Palestine generally. For my part I must return home. I hope I have been useful to Paul and Barnabas as a helper at Salamis, and I have cheerfully carried Paul's books and parchments, and perchance his cloak, but I have more important work to do than that. I feel that I must write a book about Jesus Christ, God's Son, and until that be accomplished I cannot rest. Then, dear seniors, give me your blessing. You have been given your work and God has given me mine. You are now going to Pamphylia. Well and good! may God go with you! but as for me, I must return to Jerusalem. Peter! he was nearly executed by Herod, how much longer shall I have his aid in finishing my compilation? It cannot be done here in Asia. I need much to make perfect what I have begun. Then do not let us quarrel about it. God is my judge, I feel I am doing the right thing."

But Paul had his own impetuous verdict already pronounced and it slumbered in his breast for many a month, and broke out vehemently afterwards, when Mark, having got more material by his return to

Jerusalem, was ready to join again. He was refused, and painful scenes ensued. Then comes the problem when two conscientious persons believe that their decisions are inspired and yet vary. That problem is by no means insoluble. Both can be absolutely right, and yet both opposed. It is by the imperfections of the human agency that the Controller is glorified. The decreed results are never imperilled by Human co-operation. *Finis coronat opus*. The exercise of conscientious conviction was the matter of importance, and that was accomplished in both.

For my part, I believe that Mark was quite right, and that St. Paul also was quite right. Before the Universe was born, it was ordained that Mark should write his Gospel—if man must work out his destiny. Mark's Gospel was the foundation stone of the literature of the Evangel, and without it the edifice rocks.

So blessings upon you, good Mark! and don't be ruffled by Paul's demeanour. He is not always in the third Heaven. He is an Antœus, who must touch earth sometimes.

Mark turns to hear Paul shouting, "Come back, young man, and don't dare to leave the work to which God has called you." Paul is really reddening, and the two older men, after consultation, are making a last appeal, but Mark is not to be moved.

It is not the frowning heights of the Taurus that deter him. A young man—an adventure would attract him—but from a child he apprehended that he was born to write a book which the world wanted and would never lose; therefore, retracing only a few steps, he calls out in turn, "God's work is various, and He has given me another work than yours. You have seen how insecurely our new convert is placed.

Elymas will recover his sight, for you have inflicted only temporary blindness, and he will do his best to obliterate the impressions that your teaching made. What is wanted is to fix in a portable and enduring form a manual for preachers and teachers ; for persons especially in all authority, to guide them in the righteous discharge of their several duties and for all classes to the lowest. A compendious record of the life, the sacrificial death and Resurrection of the Lord. His redeeming works and more wonderful sayings. Towards this I have already done something, but memories of even contemporaries are liable to fade, and my best source of information is Peter, who may any day be clapped in prison again. My work will not wait, though yours may. My hope and my purpose is to have my compendium numbered with the law books of every Roman Governor in the Western World. It ought to be their Directory, inspirer and guide, coupled, of course, with the ancient Scriptures. Sergius Paulas shall have one at the earliest opportunity. I haste to realise my hope." Then he lifted his burden and prepared to depart. Paul turned to his colleague and muttered, "It's no use," while Barnabas looked after the young man—through a mist. So began the Gospel according to St. Mark, the foundation stone of all Christian literature. Paul half feared and half desired that his warnings might be justified, but Mark was neither drowned, nor captured by pirates, nor despoiled by robbers. No power in the Universe, short of disobedience, could hinder his destiny until his work was done.

Mark saw more than the fishes, when long and abstractedly he gazed over the gunwale into the deep sea. He saw Great Empires, whose rulers from the

greatest to the least, had made his compendium become the soul of every legal enactment, and the polity of every nation. He ventured to believe that the administrators of Christian law would not render it void by a corrupt exercise of their power. He ventured to hope—for the man was young—that law would dwindle almost into nothingness, since every man would in due time become law-giver and administrator within his own breast. That the body politic, and with it the body proper, would have coursing through it in every artery, vein and capillary, such a life-giving stream of Heavenly energy, that no decay, no disease could give token of arrested growth, much less impending dissolution—preparing the world—throne for the coming King, whose reign would be for Ages. The ecclesiastical and the Civil powers united in the same person according to the Hebrew Norm, to be completely realised in the Messianic Kingdom.

What was that dark form, which Mark strove to determine, moving among the fishes ? A living cloud, scaly and monstrous ?

The finny brood scudded away in all directions.

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A millennium and a half have passed since St. Mark wrote his compendium, and the mocking shadow of the united powers, secular and religious, have their seat at Rome. One, Andrea Luccalmaglio, Archbishop of Krain, is the Ambassador of the Emperor Frederick III. in 1479. He was shocked by what he saw at Rome and spoke his mind plainly to the Pope. After a short imprisonment in St. Angelo, he bruited his wrongs and went to Basel to revise the traditions of the last reforming council, denounced Sixtus IV., and solemnly proclaimed a Council. The "Council"

became merely himself and to that tribunal he summoned the Pope, in terms not dissimilar to those which Paul addressed to Elymas the sorcerer.

"Francesco, of Savona, son of the Devil, you entered your office, not through the door, but through the window of Simony. You are of your father, the Devil, and labour to do your father's will." And subsequently, he asserted that "he was justified in his attempt to hold a Council for the reformation of the Church, and declared that he had not calumniated the Pope, as he had said nothing but what was notoriously true."

The Papal Legate demanded his body. The magistrates of Basil kept him in prison and refused to give him up.

Finally, Andrea hanged himself in his cell and the corpse of the unhappy man was thrown into the Rhine.

After him, Savorola failed to establish the Kingdom of Heaven, because Alexander VI. was not a forerunner of the coming Messiah. Nor did the Caliph Hammid, in our days, feed *his* flock at Adana, but rather fed upon them. And it was not because his lips were red that he was deposed. Yet the principle of uniting the secular and religious regimens in one authority, interfused by the same Holy Spirit, was and is wholly right. The wrongness is only in the rulers. The world cries and sighs for a Divine Ruler, who can do no wrong. He is on the way. Come, Lord Jesus, Come quickly!

I cannot believe that Mark's Gospel was not current before 63. The chief authority in the question is Eusebius, who quotes from Irenæus. But Irenæus, although a diligent searcher for Christian traditions, cannot be relied upon for chronology! for he an-

nounced his belief that Christ was at least 50 years old at the time of His crucifixion. His credulity and His bias have undoubtedly misled him. The promulgation of the foundation treatise of the synoptists was certainly much earlier than Eusebius supposed.

The narratives that Mark supply are distinguished by such vivid touches of detailed observation that the writer was either an eye witness, or gathered his information from others equally near and close to the events themselves—undimmed by the lapse of years and the fading memories of those who would, on the supposition, have to go back to recall what was not recent testimony.

Mark, it is my faith, hastened to complete as much as he could compile, in order to aid the hopeful Gentile propaganda. Let us use our common sense and refuse to be the slaves of scholars, where absolute certainty is not to be found. What would any man, with ordinary sense, essay to do, anxious to be obedient to fulfil the solemn commission imposed by the Lord upon His Apostles. Would not the first care be the compilation of the Testimonies, oral and written, of the wondrous story, before the generations which witnessed and heard had passed away? It is true that the promise was given that the Spirit would bring all things to their remembrance, but as in all cases where the supernatural intervenes, it is in conjunction with human efforts to use the normal methods of accomplishing the Divine Will.

Paul, himself, not being one of the chosen to itinerate with His Master, ought to have given Mark God speed! for he must have been much indebted, subsequently, to such facts of the sacred life as Mark had already got together. Mark was the best Boswell of

any of them. His was the best life to be put into the hands of strangers—the briefest and, at the same time, the fullest—the most brightly written and the most catching.

As such it is rightly selected as the best introduction to be offered for the perusal of heathen peoples, and for the informing of our heathen at home. Mark's coin, fresh from the mint, was put into circulation as soon as possible after he had returned to Jerusalem, and he did not feel himself free to offer for the second missionary journey until he had got his tract together.

Years passed, and Paul had grown wiser, so we find him writing to Timothy.

“Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.” With equal truth he might have written, “Take the Gospel of Mark and let him bring some copies with him, for he and them are profitable to me for the ministry. Bring the books, but especially the parchments, including Mark.” And as he looked round the walls of his prison doubtless the aged Apostle bitterly reflected how mistakenly he had acted towards that “young man,” who has since been the means of redeeming thousands of millions, because he obeyed God rather than man. To young men, and to every man, I say, “Take no counsel from any mortal creature, even an Apostle. Consult God only. If the Divine Voice within connotes with the voice *ab extra*, well and good; but if not, make the breach, and forfeit friendship with the nearest and dearest.”

Leaving Mark to go to Jerusalem, the two elder men pursued their way. The distance from the coast would be some 100 miles, a continuous ascent, and attended by dangers from freebooters, who in these

fastnesses carried on their desired pillage, on the few mercantile routes, with comparative immunity. Great call was there of faith and patience and casting themselves upon the mercies of an overruling providence. They would, in their ascent from oaks and planes to pines and then to cedar and juniper trees, which made black patches on the upper bleak heights. The missionaries getting to the ridge, would go over it, and then perceive another creation of Seleucus—the Pisidian Antioch—an important town, but possessing but one Synagogue.

A week would likely have been occupied in the upward climb, and with thankful hearts for journeying mercies, the two Apostles would be glad to find a place where prayer was wont to be made, and to join with the worshippers on the Sabbath day.

One must be proud of that constant nation, which, despite the temptation to get necessary gain, presented through so many ages the spectacle of foregoing the opportunity of money getting, week by week—and amid heathen peoples who had no scruples to deter them themselves. One must pause also to admire profoundly the Synagogue system and likewise the religious liberty, conferred by the Imperial power of Rome. Rome, so long as the Cæsar was worshipped, gave perfect freedom, except where some immigrant Oriental cults offended even Pagans of the West. Any new religious propaganda in A.D. 48 was prosecuted with much less difficulty than in 1848, when the Christian powers jealously drew a fence round the national state Churches, and when even now (though the leaven of liberty is working) Russia, Austria and Spain continue suspicious and averse to any divergence from the State conscience—more so than was

the case when Paul and Barnabas disturbed the equanimity of the Pisidian Synagogue.

Thanks to the Roman power, for strength can always be tolerant, the peculiar people who were harmlessly permitted to assert that the rest of the world was unclean and obnoxious to the Divine favour had been given freedom to insult every other citizen. And what was more remarkable, those arrogant denunciations made proselytes, attracted by the passion for exclusiveness and the fancied superiority that is fondly believed to attach to something not shared by the vulgar. But the Synagogue worship would also attract on much higher grounds. Men of large capacity, men of great hearts, highly trained and cultivated minds, wandering into the plain building, perceiving no vain emblem of the inscrutable and invisible Deities, were constrained to wonder and admire the contrast, and still more, the peaceful and reverent company. They heard the Prophets read, or translated into the vernacular. Prayers also said in the local language, only was the Law read in the unknown Hebrew, but the proselyte was not left to be unenlightened; an interpretation would be given.

Grave, rational, devout was this worship. The magnificent teaching of the sacred books soaring incomparably above the ethics of the philosopher, or the demands of the practical statesman was the boast of the Jew, who everywhere was a witness and a sign. The garish day, outside the Synagogue, shrank in shame, and entering the precincts, it would seem that the lofty teachings of the Scriptures must crystallise into starry forms and stud the roofs with points of light, as a shred of the midnight sky.

Wherever the Sabbath dawned, there was the same

suspension of labour and the same unadorned ritual. And, moreover, there was a most admirable provision.

Any stranger showing evidence of being a son of Abraham was spontaneously given a seat and, moreover, was invited to expound or exhort from the law and the Prophets.

There must be a high level of culture in Divine truth to allow of such a rule becoming generally observed. The Plymouth Brethren give the opportunity except the stricter sort, but there are many cases where the strangers do not speak to profit. It is and it was, to the immense credit of the Jews of the time we speak of, that the two Apostles, being seated, after the sections of prayer, Law and Prophets had been gone through, that Paul was allowed to rise, beckon with his hand and use the opportunity to introduce new matter, amongst an assembly, deeply prejudiced against any innovations.

The speech that Paul began was wonderfully like to what Stephen gave us, the old, old story of Abraham's calling, separation from the other nations, the extension of his seed, their subjection and deliverance and the prophetic intimation that one of the kingly line of David would undoubtedly appear in God's time to become not only the Saviour of the Jews, but also of the Gentiles, too. It must have been a "*hard*" saying to be told that the Messiah suffered upon the Cross. If that portion of the Gospel story was the beginning and end of it, the Evangel must inevitably be doomed, but there was a glorious sequel. The man who fulfilled the Prophets by subjecting himself to suffer upon the Cross, rose again, according to His own prediction. No foolish rumour, no idle tale, no dreams, but competent living witnesses ready in all

their worship and in all their preachings to bear the testimony that the Nazarene is the Christ; and, moreover, the speaker Paul went on to aver that Christ showed Himself to *me*, speaking to me from the Heavens, not once, but subsequently, confirming the truth which the twelve are ceaselessly proclaiming that the Desire of nations has appeared, has opened to Heaven a free, unbought entrance, and has rewards to confer upon His faithful followers.

The amazing and incredible story, so glorious, and yet so disappointing—for the Jews would be ready to give up any guarantees for eternal felicity in exchange for immediate dominion and vengeance upon their foes—that amazing and disappointing story could not fail to excite an extraordinary commotion. It was Stephen over again. Now surely does a Nemesis overtake our errors. Is it at all likely that such a world-wide event, pregnant with such enormous issues, should be committed to a few insignificant itinerant preachers to communicate? Both humble men, one shows upon his hands the marks of his trade. The other, an impressive figure enough, but not captivating in speech.

Is it thus in this clandestine manner that the conqueror of the world, who is to turn the world upside down, without sword or shield, essays to deliver Israel?

The secular views of the bulk of the congregation, made the spiritual interpretations of Gospel freedom, Gospel conquests and Gospel rewards an offence to them. We can readily make excuses for them. Suppose at service time on Sunday, at the Christchurch Congregational Church, London, two Russians came with permission to speak after the "preliminaries"

are over, and announced that the Millennium had come, that the Lord Himself had descended upon Constantinople, and that His palace and Court are there, invisible.

In confirmation of the amazing announcement, these two Russians are able to testify that we have seen the Lord with spiritual eyes, and that to as many as believe the testimony, it shall be given them to see likewise. How many converts would you expect to such a cock-and-bull story ?

It was an interesting contrast to the modern fashion in our day, to find in the Synagogue a considerable number of "honourable women" among the worshippers, but they did not predominate. It is certain that their habitual presence betokened a true and intelligent preference for the Jewish over the Pagan rites. In these latter, "honourable" women could not without shame take part. There was nothing in the Synagogue worship to appeal to trifling minds, no music, no gorgeous and striking ceremonies as at the Temple. Hence those women who joined themselves to the Jews by proselytism must have been religiously minded and predisposed to hear what the new Apostles had to say. We can be sure that in the women's gallery at Iconium there were many earnest listeners. And if it was screened by lattice work there would be eyes and ears enough, pressed against the openings. Talk of Epochs ! This first missionary journey of St. Paul abounded in them. Iconium made an epoch, and that full and accurately reported speech of St. Paul was a principal pier in the Christian Temple he was rearing. Politic, wise but fervent, the opening of the address by its matter and manner arrested and interested everyone. Paul was in his

usual good form ; not under influenza, as afterwards in Galatia he was fated to be, and both Jew and Gentile, men and women, wanted to hear him again, for " his bodily presence " was by no means " weak," nor " his speech contemptible." Remember that Paul, from his earliest years, so soon as he could comprehend anything, was led to ponder the destinies of mankind, and in learning of God's Covenant with Abraham, he rejoiced exceedingly to discover that God's promise to Israel entailed world-wide salvation. Hence, even the Gentile hope was by the young boy connected with the Abrahamic Covenant. His persecution of the Christians was inspired by the dread that the Eternal purpose would be jeopardised by the chosen people departing from the strict letter of the Law. The Messiah was to come only to a prepared and obedient people, and then the rest of the world would share in the Messianic privileges in the Kingdom which would be as Universal as it would be Eternal.

The young student of prophecy could not imagine that the body of pious and able Rabbis could be entirely wrong in expecting the Messiah to come in a glorious manner, with worldly pomp and armed strength to punish His adversaries and to enthrone Israel upon the subjected Roman. He stumbled at that stone—the despised, sentenced and crucified Nazarene. All his prejudices, in favour of a premature triumph, inclined him to misinterpret the prophecies, and to be utterly disgusted at the pretensions put forward by the contemptible Nazarenes, whose Messiah sneaked into the world in a humble village, worked at a Carpenter's bench, and richly deserved the penalty of the imposition he had ven-

tured upon. He had seen none of the Lord's miracles while in Arabia, but he was fated to know one. One was quite enough, it was an eye-opener and in one flash the true interpretation of the Prophets was made known to him. Hence the argument was to show to the Jews at Iconium that Jesus of Nazareth was the fulfilment of prophecy, that John, whom so many followed, was indeed His Forerunner and expressly warned his disciples that he was nothing more than that. That in condemning Jesus, their rulers had fulfilled the Scriptures. And the glad tidings are that through His death upon the Cross there is forgiveness of sins, and, moreover, that there is a Resurrection from the dead—not merely a sanguine conjecture, but a positive assurance of a new life, a powerful life, an everlasting life, to come. A new world, a new society, introduction to the Highest, infinite possibilities, and infinite progress towards the perfect and the Divine. That was glad tidings, indeed. Pledged to the world by the sacrifice and the Resurrection. Antioch received it only in part; the news was too good to be true. And again, there was the everlasting offence of the Cross, which required the bended knee and the contrite heart. That did not come by nature, but by grace.

So though the Gentiles were glad to see a barrier thrown down, there was not unmingled satisfaction. A shred of potassium thrown upon the waters, and instantly what seething and commotion. Such was mention of Calvary.

The elements of the auditory were divided—some cleaving to the Cross and Heaven, and others joining with the Sadducees to hold aloof from the insulting novelty. Only last Sabbath all was peace. The

Chazzan received from the Reader the duly interpreted Law and the Prophets. The Sybilline Prophets were duly and carefully wrapped up and stowed away in the Ark. The reader had made the audience know the sense. Perhaps he spoke in Latin (for Antioch was a Colonia), perhaps he spoke in Greek. Finally he used the vernacular of Pisidia. But there was no Cross. No offence was given to anybody. The harmony was unbroken. The congregation yawned and did as they always did, and went away. But Antioch was henceforth to know no peace. Not peace, but a sword. Groups on that fateful Sabbath were formed and reformed. One knot earnestly discussing, another cheering a loud denunciator. And between this Sabbath and the next, the city was in constant controversy. The Gentile population was eager to have ratified their enfranchisement to the promised blessings that Israel boasted of. And the born Hebrews, although Proselytizers, felt, to open the door to the whole world, was to push them back and to let them down by a step. So, as it was doomed then and is doomed now, the offence to the natural man, abiding and irremovable, is the cross of Christ.

“What a pity,” might say the officers of the Synagogue. “What a pity—these men had not been forbidden. We were all living together in harmony—only we would not eat with the Gentiles and we must glance down upon them from our pedestals. Why should we be disturbed by the abuse of freedom of speech in our Synagogue?”

The Jews were good tax-payers and the Imperial power smiled at their harmless superstition. The elders were seriously anxious. In every workshop,

in every mart, at every family or public gathering, the new doctrine was the distasteful topic.

Sabbath came round, streams of people were seen wending their way to the Synagogue—there was no room for a quarter of the people. There was great difficulty in closing the doors and the space within was occupied by a standing and perspiring crowd. A little piece of finesse. The door-keepers sought to exclude Paul and Barnabas, on the plea that there was no room, but there was a party, to whom the Cross was already dear, and the Resurrection a glorious hope. So the little finesse fell away like a cobweb and the two disturbers of the public peace were given seats in the centre, and there was a drawn breath and a general rustle.

Whispers arose. “Who’s who?” “Oh! that is the big man.” “No! it is the other. Look at his head, and he has a tongue I can tell you.” Breathless silence in A.D. 48.

But it was only the precursor of a storm. Paul had not gone far in his address before the mixed audience were interrupting and others encouraging him, and answering and challenging each other, “contradicting and blaspheming.” The solemn order of the service was quite destroyed. It was a wretched Sabbath for those who were accustomed to have the ruffled feathers of their souls sabbatically smoothed down and their spirits exalted by holding communion with the Father of their spirits.

They, the preachers, were not the cause. It was the peculiar nature of the truth that they had to declare. It was doomed and ever will be doomed to the end of this dispensation, to be a sower of discord, a divider of families, a separator of chief friends, a segregator

of political parties, a rock of offence, to be broken upon, or break to pieces.

Barnabas sought hard to allay the commotion, but it was speedily seen that he was not so agile in controversy as Paul, and perceiving it himself, he sat down, when Paul sprang up, with his bubbling enthusiasm unquelled. Giving his accustomed sign, a silence was made. "It was needful that the word of God should first be spoken unto you, but inasmuch as ye put it from you and deem yourselves unworthy of Eternal Life, lo! we turn to the Gentiles."

A suppressed roar from the Gentiles and a howl of rage from the Jews, but his hand was still raised, so feeling was restrained again. And he quoted, for the benefit of the howlers, from Isaiah xlix. 6, slightly varied from the Septuagint, "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying 'I have sent thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for Salvation to the ends of the earth.' " And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to Eternal Life believed.

And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. But the Jews stirred up the gentlewomen of rank who worshipped with them, and the leading men of the city, and raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and expelled them from their neighbourhood. But they shook off the dust from their feet as a protest against them and came to Iconium. And as for the disciples, they were more and more filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Now a question arises. Did not the establishment and spread of the Christian faith depend principally upon the expert application of the Prophecies, to

that Jesus in whom they were fulfilled ? Was it not to prepare the Apostles for the work they were commanded to undertake that the Unknown Stranger drew near, on the way to Emmaus, unfolding the Scriptures from Moses and all the Prophets, concerning the things foretold of Himself ? Was it not because that Paul was early trained in a knowledge of the Prophets that he was qualified after conversion to become the most successful of all the Apostles ? Was not Apollos also, through being mighty in the Scriptures, able to confound and confute the Jews ? Unquestionably, if the attitude at present taken up by the Christian Churches had been adopted by the primitive believers, they would never have made the progress they did. Indeed, it is a question whether the planting of churches anywhere would succeed, if the Evangelists studiously neglected Prophecy.

But though everything depended upon the proved correspondence between prediction and fulfilments, to-day, strange to say, Christian believers pay no attention, in the mass, to prophecy at all. Those who venture to whisper any interpretations are accounted only wild fanatics, who can be tolerated, if they do not become a nuisance. It is apologetically conceded that the circumstances connected with the first Advent were verifications of ancient Prophets, but as to the second Advent and the circumstances foretold respecting that—the least said the better ! Someone has said, “ The study of prophecy either finds men mad, or makes them so.” Well ! we are among the believers who would rank themselves with Paul, Peter, and Apollos, and would deny that their knowledge of prophecy had deprived them of reason. On the contrary, we believe that they were made wise unto salva-

tion through that very knowledge which they depreciate.

Do the generality of Church and Chapel worshippers ever attend a course of lectures or sermons on the "last days," or upon the second Advent and its sequel? Fifty years ago it was by no means uncommon, but for thirty years and more the entire subject is studiously put on the shelf as unworthy of practical men! And this, too, when the most clear and express fulfilments are going on before our eyes day by day. Judicial blindness has really seized the Church, that blindness is itself one of the signs.

The signs given us by the Lord Himself are indeed numerous enough. A few may be referred to.

(1) A general weakening of faith in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Every one of the distinctive marks by which a supernatural Saviour was predicted are to-day being refused and explained away. The blessed Lord is dragged down to the common level of humanity and man is placed upon a pedestal. What the misbelievers refuse to worship, they arrogate and claim for themselves. Human idolatry is the heathenism of to-day.

(2) The atonement is removed from foundation truth and the implication that sin requires it is practically denied. A vicarious sacrifice in the person of the sinless Lamb of God is regarded as a relic of barbarism and cruel rites, having no true bearing either upon sin or salvation.

(3) The Divine in the Immortal Saviour is credited to us poor mortals, and men are supposed to enter upon an upward path towards the Divine Nature—without requiring or accepting grace nor needing the supernatural aid of the third person of the Trinity.

To save oneself is within human competence. Man can "save face" and dispense with repentance and faith.

(4) The Christian revelation, as embodied in book form, is accounted a mass of myths, legends and incredibilities. The Gospels being more than half full of miracles, if deprived of these, the shreds remaining are scarce worth preserving.

(5) That there is a second Advent, a Resurrection, or a Judgment to come is denied.

(6) That the predicted signs of the second Advent have, therefore, no significance.

Now, of course, to those who negative all essential revealed truth, it is useless to argue. There is no standard to appeal to. But to those belated souls who still linger in the dawnings of Revealed Truth, we would just draw their attention to one sign which augurs that the end of the Age is near and the glorious appearing of our Lord is at hand.

That sign is the *unexpectedness* of the event to the unprepared world.

By several parables and by several plain statements our Lord has warned those who are living in the last days of the age, that His coming will be like a snare upon the face of the earth, that it will surprise men as the flood did, that it would come like a thief, none expecting its arrival.

We also are now in the days of Noe. There is open scoffing at any Apocalyptic vision, any, the slightest variance from the ordinary course of nature. All things will remain as they were from the beginning of creation, the *beginning* of creation not accounted for—no miracle, at all events, in that.

And yet, in our own experience, the *unexpected* is

a peculiar mark of the period. Carthage, Martinique, San Francisco, Galveston, Jamaica, Messina. Here are only six great earthquake catastrophes—ruthlessly interfering with the ordinary course of nature—stealing upon the victims like a thief in the night. If *that* is the course of nature, then the second Advent is to be expected.

But another prominent feature of this Pre-Second Advent period is the prevailing lawlessness, evidencing itself in a hastening corruption in all the departments of commerce, manufactures and the public service.

Commerce tends increasingly to become gambling—in commodities. The Law does not license open gaming tables, but the same thing, on a large scale, is permitted under the guise of business. Men who have never made anything useful and could not, bend all their powers to make markets, reaping in consequence great fortunes, leaving them to their heirs, who claim or expect respect, on the ground simply that a larger stake than ordinary was attended by success when the dice turned up.

Gambling in insurances, imperilling life, gambling in commodities.

Our Lord's indications of *unpreparedness* were appropriate to His times; marriage and giving in marriage, eating and drinking. But how much greater the impressiveness when the dice are being rattled in Wall-street and Mincing-lane and the Bourses of Paris, Berlin and Vienna—over the manœuvring of making corners in corn, or cotton, or oil, or rubber. The intensity of excitement, the feverish haste, the fighting and struggling, the moistened shirt sleeves and perspiring brows, the shouting and the “wiring.” One would think all this hub-bub was

concerned with an absolute vital issue—a fear lest an eclipse of the sun would be permanent. But the real issues before these exchanges are, not the destruction or the increases of the commodities, but merely to push up their prices a few points higher. The solid utilities of the commodities being unchanged—corn and cotton being sublimely indifferent whether they are put up or down. While all the Bourses are trembling and thrilling, while several of the gamblers have provided themselves with loaded revolvers and phials of poison—in case—while such gigantic corners as were never heard of in the history of commerce were being engineered—Suddenly, “prices” go down for ever! For the Lord has come!

Everything was so beautifully arranged for a deal that certain operators could make some millions in a fortnight. But what a misfortune! The Lord has come, and the operators are scudding away to hide themselves in dens and caves, unavailing shelters from the Wrath of the Lamb!

CHAPTER XXII.

ICONIUM.

A LETTER was found on the floor of the Synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia, some Sabbaths later. It had been apparently jerked out of the hand of the bearer and trodden underfoot, and the papyrus had suffered by a rent, but closing the edges, all could be deciphered.

“ To Marcus Flavius.

“ When I was returning from the cemetery, where I deposited my darling child, after my costly, but unavailing offerings to Esculapius, and unable to dispel the gloom and grief by which I was possessed, I saw an unusual crowd outside the Jews’ synagogue. I thought it might serve as a distraction to attempt to enter. Also I had long desired to make myself acquainted with the tenets of that strange people, who live and dwell apart and seem to have little in common with the rest of the world.

“ While pressing in, I learnt that there were two strangers who had last Sabbath brought some extraordinary intelligence and it was so incredible that they were besought to give it again and explain its import. I was almost the last to enter before the doors were shut, and I had succeeded in pulling my Freedman after me. Oh ! my friend Marcus, I was indeed fortunate, for if I can credit it, of which I am hopeful, it will dispel the darkness and dread that surrounds our daily path, and give me a consolation and joy undreamt of.

“The two strangers were deeply acquainted with the Jews’ ancient writings, and they came to tell in all the Synagogues that the *Great One*, Whom all their nation had been looking for, had actually come. But he had come in such a strange guise and for such a purpose that the generality of those that heard them were moved to the utmost scorn and indignation. It appears that he came into the world as the son of a carpenter, and instead of coming to break the yoke of Rome, all he pretended to do in the first instance, was to break off the yoke of the people’s sins. You can imagine the profound disappointment! But it appeared to me, Marcus, that this news concerned not alone Jesus, but every man born into the world. For the gods are to be feared, and they do punish unto death, those who offend them, and to be enfranchised from giving them offence would be conferring upon us an inestimable benefit. The best, the strangest and the most extraordinary news of all was to come. These strangers positively averred that their great Messiah, after allowing Himself to be put to death upon the Cross, as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, had actually risen from the dead, as He had predicted; and to chosen disciples, had ate and drank with him, and giving them a charge to preach the glad news everywhere that the reign of sin and death is under sentence, and Heaven’s doors, with Eternal Life, are open to all believers. Is this madness, dear Marcus, or is it true? I venerated your father and you dutifully mourned him. My treasured son has been torn from me. Is this Great Prophet going to replace him in my empty arms? Oh! Marcus! if this news were only true!

“My Freedman was much interested and the good

fellow seemed filled with joy, but I had reason to suspect that he was not quite as honest as he should be—for I had missed a favourite ring from its accustomed place. Do you know, the good fellow brought it to me yesterday morning and begged my forgiveness? He said it was listening to the strangers in the Synagogue that compelled him to do it, and he asked to be scourged. He was a passable slave before, but now he is a different man, devoted and faithful. Dear Marcus, my faith in the gods has been rudely shaken, and I had no certain hope of a life to come. I have allowed my freedman to join the new Brotherhood, and wish I could be possessed of the joy that he evidently has. Let me know what you think about it? We are coming to the end of the world.” (The conclusion and the signature were torn off.)

The letter had reached its bourne, and the receiver had troubled to see for himself, but the Apostles had gone; nevertheless, it was in such manner that the Evangel got to be propagated.

The Apostles had founded the first Catholic Church, a community composed of both converted Jews and proselytes from the Gentiles. The influence of ladies among the Jews and Proselytes had much to do with the enmity aroused against the new teaching. Women are naturally averse to change—reverers of antiquity, the established order, wanting in initiation and originality. But when that Divine truth comes upon their souls, native predisposition avails nothing, and the women converts to Christianity have furnished the brightest beads upon the roll of martyrs.

Knowing that they had planted an imperishable seed, Paul and Barnabas shook off the dust of this city and departed for new enterprises. There was

much traffic on the route, a large lake was on their right, and remained in sight during the first day and the second. At length the mountain range on the left bore away Eastward, and the travellers came upon a great level plain—another Arabia, though not so burning. Ere long the walls and towns and gates of a city were descried. The browsing plots were seamed by sand and the scenery resembled much of the interior of Australia. But there was also a rich alluvial soil, which the blight of Islam was subsequently to neglect. Evidently, Asia Minor had in former times a minor Caspian Sea, which washed the bases of the northern ridge of the Taurus and sent its wave to the western spurs of the Karagh Dagh, and reflecting the snowy summit of Mount Argæus, ran into the ravines of the Cappadocian and Galatian Highlands. By evaporation, this inland sea bared its floor : and in our day it is dotted by ponds, meres and lakes, where storks and swans congregate. It was where these memorials of ancient Lacustrinæ were strewn, south and east, that ICONIUM stood up and looked all around in lonely isolation.

From its walls, south, east and west, there would appear every now and then silver glimmerings of those mountains, which once bordered the inland sea, but which now start abruptly from the level plain and rise to where the sun has no power. Konieh must present, from its ramparts, a view, not dissimilar to that attainable from the Boulevard des Pyrenees at Pau.

Nothing is more irritating than the constant scanning of the terminal object of a tedious journey, which seems to evade every attempt to enlarge its bulk or to disclose the details which distance veils. Yard by

yard, mile by mile, is swallowed up and nothing seems done. Iconium was not to be conquered. Better for Paul and Barnabas to withdraw their gaze. And, indeed, Paul need not be so anxious to get stoned as he was going to be, in the next town beyond it, and thus apparently reach the end of his Apostleship just when it was beginning.

ICONIUM at last ! They had traversed some hundred miles. The dust of Antioch had been shaken off ; plenty of new dust had been acquired. Was this also to be rejected ?

The missionaries followed the order of their going, given by the Captain of their salvation. First were the elect, ancient people to hear the glad tidings, and only after they had rejected it, were the Gentiles to be privileged. The splendid opportunity afforded by the Synagogue was, of course, to be availed of. It is clear that this Synagogue order, with its open ministry, was a prime factor in the spread of the Evangel. Why should it not be available to-day ?

The Apostles, we judge, took the opportunity of preaching Christ to the Jews of Iconium and in a short time the inevitable results ensued. The whole town was divided into two hostile parties, and in this remote, but capital city, no doubt the strength of party feeling would be particularly strong. The commonalty would incline to the new tidings. The Jews and the upper classes would be against any innovations. But the Apostles were not left without witness, many disciples were made, inducing the Apostles to remain to foster the growth of the infant Church.

Their success, of course, was the signal for danger. Upon the highway between the city of Antioch news would travel speedily, and the chiefs of the Synagogue,

alarmed at the spreading heresy, redoubled their efforts to tear up the seedlings that were being rooted at the neighbouring town.

The lady agency—the Primrose League of that day—put forth its wiles, and delegates were sent to stop the anarchic movement. It was time to use the power committed to the Apostles to use upon extraordinary occasions and exert that miraculous potency which was one of the special gifts of the Holy Spirit.

“The Lord gave testimony to the word of His grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their *hands*.” (Acts xiv. 3.)

Ah! those miraculous hands! It was by their hands they banished fevers, communicated grace, lifted up cripples, opened eyes and taught dumb tongues to praise the risen Saviour. If these wonder working hands were deprived of life, the unanswerable arguments of the miracles would no longer be forthcoming. So murderous counsels were entered upon, stoning was the fitting cure. Paul heard of it! Stephen weighted his heart. Nemesis was searching for him. Already rude assaults were being made openly upon the Apostles and their following. So having considered the matter (Stephen’s voice not silenced) and gratefully remembering that they had already been the means of planting a second Catholic Church, and moreover, of healing a multitude of persons, the missionaries arrived at the conclusion that it would be expedient for them to depart hence. One cannot but suspect that it was the Nemesis of Stephen’s stoning that led to the clandestine retreat.

It is no use attempting to evade the punishment of sin. Paul, perhaps, thought that he had escaped when the two, with the help of disciples, had got free

from the city, but Nemesis had gone before them. She was waiting with her sword, cutting the air, mounted upon the gates of Zeus, which stood at the entrance of Lystra.

“Once was I stoned,” he said (2 Corinthians ii. 25). Yes ! He had to be, but vengeance being taken, Nemesis was satisfied. One offering at Calvary needed to propitiate remorseless justice, and being paid, no further repetition is required.

Iconium remains, it is the modern Konieh. It was made the capital of Seljukian Sultans, who did much to enlarge the Ottoman Empire—lamentable and accursed issue of the glorious triumphs of the Cross, through St. Paul. We are told that the walls made a circuit of two miles and the materials were mainly the remains of Grecian, Roman and Byzantine carved stones, capitals and bases, and engraved entablatures appearing here and there. A miserable varnish is put upon the decadent civilization of the Turk, a railway connects Smyrna with it now.

On to Lystra ! This city cannot now be identified with any certainty, among the mounds of overthrown churches and Temples. It is supposed to lie some fifty miles south-east towards Derbe, which is similarly left to the archæologists to fight over. A far-off Divine event was awaiting Paul at Lystra. He had to see—to convert and to consecrate, one who was to be fellow-labourer in the Gospel, and to be given the oversight of another Catholic Church. Nemesis and Timothy—the wound and the consolation wrapped in each others arms.

Hurry on ! not from dogs behind, but run to accomplish your destinies in front.

In the streets of **LYSTRA** was a man, from his birth—

had never walked, had to be carried—an object of compassion. But much compensation is given to such unfortunates. They were, in those days, exempted from working for a living, though some handicraft certainly might be found for them. An idle life that thousands might envy, watching the stream of humanity, scant though, perhaps, for Lystra was not a big place, yet sufficient to give one cripple a living—offering a silent beggar's plea and plaint, as he showed to the passers-by his incapable members.

Paul had a keen intelligent vision and perceived that the cripple had faith to be healed. Now, reader ! can you believe for a moment that Paul was going to speculate, or venture upon a chance, where, if failure should ensue, the cause of Christ would be damned in all that region. Paul's faith was equal to the cripple's. He *knew* ; first, that he was bidden to do what he was going to do, and next that what he was about to do would succeed absolutely. Hence, with a loud voice he cried out, “ Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.” (Acts xiv. 10.) Striking, indeed ! no long practice required to balance himself, on the first essay. He was able to walk and leap, like the cripple at the gate of the Temple. The people were delighted : they, like all worshippers, wanted a proof of the Divinities they worshipped, and here a confirmation of their faith was given. Their city was being honoured by a visit from the celestial regions ; two tutelary Divinities, come down in the likeness of men.

Send word to the priest of Zeus and let us sacrifice to them. They called Barnabas Jupiter and Paul Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.

Meantime, perhaps, the healers were busy

with the restored cripple, going with him to his abode and preaching to his relatives the power of God to make men who cannot walk uprightly, to do so. And, returning to the place where a crowd has assembled, lo, a strange procession was seen approaching. The priest of Jupiter was leading oxen and garlands to the Temple at the gates and would offer sacrifice to them—to those two wayfarers—the offscouring of the world. The Roman Emperor was diligently propagating the religion of Cæsar worship, which meant no more than may Heaven preserve the Roman Empire and prevent any enemies playing knavish tricks against it, or in brief *Salus Populi, Suprema Lex*. But the idea of receiving Divine honours, to the devout Jews, enlightened to comprehend the adorable Trinity, was a blasphemous thing, to be abhorred. Hence, regardless of economy, the two Apostles hastened to run in and out of the crowd, tearing their clothes and crying, “Sirs! why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you, that you should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made Heaven and earth, and the sea and all things that are therein. Who, in times past, suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave rain from Heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness. And with these sayings, scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.” (Acts xiv. 14—18.)

It was quite to be expected that the townspeople would be deeply affronted by being, as it were, made fools of. Politic Jesuit missionaries would have adroitly used the oppor-

tunity and turned it to the best accounts for Roman Propaganda.

Not so, could the genuine and sincere emissaries, sent forth to witness against idolatry, be implicated in the last and worst form of it—the idolatry of man. The insult offered against the vain citizens, who imagined themselves special favourites of Heaven, could not be condoned. A revulsion of feeling took place. The leaping cripple was a hard nut to crack, but the multitude were now prepared to believe anything. The two tramps were impostors, and the cripple had been deceiving the city for years. Cunning bandages had made his limbs appear helpless, but the false Mercury whispered how he could be rewarded, and straightway he leaped to his feet. So the lately applauding people were enraged and took up stones. Stimulated also by the emissaries from Iconium. Here was Nemesis. Paul was battered, and note, Barnabas was not touched. His apparently lifeless body was dragged out of the gates. The scornful populace jeered at his Godship. “Let him arise!”

But there was an awestruck circle, standing round the prostrate form of the Apostle, and among them was a boy, who had imbibed the teaching of his mother and his grandmother, and who especially treasured up every word that fell from the lips of Paul. He was deeply affected, and as he lent over his Father in Christ, hot tears fell upon his face. Timothy saw a movement, he straightened himself and declared, “He is breathing!” “He is alive!” Timothy was right. The circle is delighted. Paul gets up miraculously, without assistance, and, apparently not in pain, walks back boldly right into the persecuting city, feeling

that the Divine protection is over him. The next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

A few hours would suffice to bring the assaulted Apostles to a comparative haven of rest. Nothing is recorded of sufferings, or perils at *Derbe*. It was a frontier town at this extremity of the Roman dominion, and, having reached it, they thought to retrace their steps, confirming the disciples and appointing elders, but before setting out for the return journey, they had the happiness of making many believers.

Derbe, which the Apostle re-visited twice subsequently, has given no striking annals to history ; but in the fourth century it had a Bishop who was present at the Council of Constantinople. Happy is the country or city that has no annals. The missionaries doubtless found it a place of refreshment and peace, after the agitating and cruel persecution which had driven them forth from the three other cities. The determination of the Apostles to return over the same enemies' territory, testifies to their solemn consecration to the work they had undertaken. It was not favourable opportunities, *per se*, that they sought out. If such presented themselves, they would be embraced, but it was not ease, facility, or a speedy triumph that they looked for. It was simply the prosperity and the permanence of the work begun. Apostolic objects and methods of extending Christ's Kingdom contrast painfully with some modern instances. The main activity of whole Churches absorbed in raising funds to discharge debts that ought never to have been incurred : and a riotous bazaar romping through a week, after six months preparation, under the idea that in some way, no unconsidered Christian can divine how

the Kingdom of our Lord is being extended. Yes ! the contrast is indeed great.

Paul and Barnabas, when exhorting the converts to steadfastness, under the searching trial of loss of employment and trade, the women-kind assailing the husbands to feed the children at the price of Apostacy, and the Jewish ladies using all their arts to suppress the movement, or make the non-believers suffer for it—Ready to face the same threatening dangers, *another stoning* ? Yet Paul presses on, upon the same scene of rapid success and then ruin, determining to build just where the enemy is most active. It is both beautiful and sublime, this return upon the routed field, and the exhortation to the converts. “We can only enter the Kingdom of God by passing through much tribulation.” As these two pioneers were solemnly consecrated to become Evangelists by the simple ceremony of laying on hands, after prayers and fasting ; so in like manner, Paul and Barnabas ordained elders among the infant Ecclesia. We can imagine how tenderly solicitous the Apostles were in giving counsel and encouragement. No fine exemptions from difficulty, pains and sacrifices. No ! nothing in the shape of bribery. Modern exhortations largely deal with the worldly success in buying and selling, that is supposed to be involved in repenting and believing, and gaining the two worlds. The first Gentile Churches were made of different material than that. They quietly accepted the conditions—loss of consideration, separation from chief friends, the loss of income, the ruin of their social future. And yet these plants, exposed to every bitter wind, lightning, storm and the uprooting of a sleepless enemy, they persisted. How did it happen ? It was the “expulsive

power of a new affection," the *new* Friend, whose overpowering attractions took captive the souls which were throbbing with a new life—that of God Himself.

Oh, the marvel and the glory of it! No Apostle left to succour them and to educate them, raw from Paganism and with no Christian literature, which Mark was so concerned to provide—little acquaintance with the Jewish Scriptures. I am speaking now of the main constituents of those Churches, for I conceive them to be not only composed of Jews and Proselytes, but also of Gentiles unattached hitherto and absolutely ignorant. It is marvellous to think of them left as sheep in the desert without a pastor, but they survived and they *grew*. What is the explanation? It is that they were not cut off from the ministry of the Good Shepherd and His blessed Spirit. He whose delight were ever in the sons of men, did not desert His own for whom He bled. No! It was under that apparent orphanhood that infant Churches of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe struck root and many were turned unto the Lord. Talk of miracles! How irrefutable the simple facts that with everything to deter men from embracing the Gospel, yet it became rooted in defiance of every obstacle and without any specially provided Bishop, Angel or Overseer.

The Apostles descended from the mountains and came again to Perga; the city which the painful departure of Mark would make memorable. While Paul and Barnabas were busy preaching, Mark would be busy collecting, transcribing and diligently gathering all authentic oral traditions, a work of inexpressible value, to which the Church is everlastingly indebted.

The Apostles preached at *Perga*, but with what

measure of success we are not told. The place was even then decaying, and now the site is a mass of ruins. Attaleia was nearer the sea than Perga, and hence it grew at the expense of the latter. Ere they sailed thence for the Syrian Antioch it must be supposed that they preached the word there also. And when they had come, "whence they had been recommended by the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled," they gathered the Church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles. And there they abode long time with the disciples. Acts xiv., 27, 28.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE CHURCH'S MEASLES.

Now when the infant Church, breathing the air of Truth, like a young Hercules, destined to strangle every Python, even in its cradle, and was crowing and crying, "Look ! look ! at the sweet flowers, and look ! look ! at the bright sun—the splendid child—a new creation was threatened by premature dissolution by the crafty green-eyed jealousy of certain of the Jewish Christians, whose song was perpetually "Circumcision, Tradition, the Law and Christ."

Notwithstanding that Peter had silenced them at Jerusalem by the plain unvarnished tale of the wondrous circumstances attending the conversion of Cornelius and his household, and its marvellous sequel—the Pentecostal shower upon a congregation of Gentiles—the Spirit bestowing His gifts in equal measure and equal diversity upon those who heard the Evangel, there was, deep down in the breasts of those who conformed to the decision of the Apostolic Council, a section who were leavened by underground dissatisfaction. They could not brook the surrender of those cherished privileges which they presumed to believe were reserved for a mere fraction of the race. If we are to be no longer a privileged nation and must receive into our Ecclesia barbarians from outside, they should, at all events, be made to conform to the burdens and the barely tolerable yoke which our Law entails. This section, therefore, determined secretly to undo all the work done already by the Apostles, and at its

inception prevent the great enfranchisement of souls going further.

Our superiority, this section felt, was recognised in being a *minority*. To open the Kingdom of Heaven to Demos! Monstrous thought! Where should we be then? So while the infant Church was crowing and growing, after a wild night, when some craft had perished in Scandaroon—masts sticking up—some trading Jews thought that the Gentile Christians were getting salvation too cheap, and that the value of Christian faith would be lowered if a quantity of it were thrown upon the market. To clog the onward progress of the new cult, it was expedient to insist upon a rite, exceedingly repugnant to mankind generally, but indispensable to the Jew. The monopolist section rightly conceived that if Circumcision were insisted upon, the invasion of the Barbarians would be checked and the pride of selection and election to the ancient people would be gratified and conserved. While pondering this theology, they remarked to each other casually that “last night’s hurricane would benefit our wares.”

Hence these black emissaries presented themselves at the hospitable door of the Antiochean Church, and their thesis was, “without Circumcision and obedience to the Law, none can be saved.” That initial rite comprised in itself the whole Jewish system. All the bundle of needless appendages, banded together, presented one neck. If the Apostles were to use the sword of truth the whole system would fall, like scaffolding, when the top stone had been placed.

Paul, with his eagle glance, perceived at once where the battle of freedom and truth must be waged. This was the citadel. The whole system must totter and

fall if Circumcision be ignored. And conversely, no enthronement of the Lord over all can conscientiously take place, unless Christ Himself be known as fulfilling all the Law and being able to make a present of all that He is and all that He has and is able yet to perform for the humblest believer.

It was a crisis in the history of Christianity, comparable only to that which occurred some 280 years later, when Arius expressly sought to deprive the sinner of obtaining pardon, and tried to erase ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ from the Lord's diadem.

It took 100 years for the Christian Church to strangle that Python—that old serpent, Redivivus, and although Constantius, by his armies, endeavoured to strike leprosy among the hosts of the true Israel, the crisis was ultimately overcome and Theodosius—God given instrumentality of secular power—replaced the hopes and fortunes of mankind upon the only path where they could be safely carried, in the faith and acknowledgment of the proper Deity of Christ.

It was inevitable that prolonged disputations should ensue.

Are you accredited by the Church at Jerusalem? No! Did you consult with Peter, John or James? No! Then you are *not* commissioned by the Church to reverse the judgment which was orally proclaimed at the last conference and tacitly accepted by the brethren who were not present? No! they were not! But permit us to say that it is not alone our private opinion. We have a strong backing at Jerusalem, which since that question was mooted is becoming an increasing party and we have felt it right to acquaint you with the state of conviction at present at Jerusalem.

Paul, no less than Peter, had his Divine revelation. It is useless to argue with men who have had revelations. Every individual member of Christ's Body in the Church has his own special revelation. To be faithful to that, is the whole duty of a Christian. It is a voice that speaks with no uncertain sound. To hear it, is to fear, and to turn to the Lord and to await His commands. Days and nights were consumed in the vain wrangle. If these Jewish Christians thought they had a good backing at Jerusalem, Paul *knew* that the whole family of man was behind *his* back, and he was not going to surrender one inch. Christ had unbarred the gate of the Kingdom and called Peter and Paul to press it open. Each had done so and nations and tribes were beckoned to follow. And now, some wretched specimens of Christian disciples who had no inkling of the Universal religion, which the King of the Jews came to establish, wanted to trip up the Gentiles as they pressed in.

"You must be Circumcised and keep the Law if you would be saved." Paul and Barnabas denied it *in toto*, and the neophytes trembled and were disquieted while the debates went on. The new born child of Redemption was crowing loudly in joy and zeal when these trading Jews came in with a wet blanket. It is interminable and unbearable, we will go to Jerusalem and get ample confirmation and authority which will settle the matter for ever. Then did the pious Jews lift up holy hands in thanks, for they were convinced they would prevail—so rapidly the prejudice was augmenting. They put their spectacles upon their noses and took out pins to add to their phylacteries. They had not forgotten to bring with them tiny weights and scales to tithe mint, anise and cummin,

while neglecting the weightier matters of the Law—Justice, Mercy and Faith. Then withdrawing themselves from the meal offered them, they munched alone what the Law allowed them to eat, and pulled out their tablets to calculate what they had made in the market, while despoiling the Egyptians.

The hybrid idea of joining Judaism and Christianity leashed like hounds, or rather attempting to yoke Pegassus caught straying from the Elysian fields with the broken winded, broken kneed and half-starved old horse of Judaism and harnessing them to the conquering chariot of Christ was, indeed, incongruous and fatal.

Pegassus must inevitably kick his neighbour to death, but before that the chariot would be overturned. However, all altercation was for the present suspended. These small retailers, including apothecaries, awaited with confidence the issue. The attempt to push the Gentile cable through the eye of the Jewish needle was foredoomed to fail. Private information had reached them that the Cave of Adullam was crammed full. They were hopeful, even assured. They had killed two birds with one stone, had had a good "deal" at Antioch, and had also dealt a blow at that most serious spirit of liberty which was invalidating the privileged heirs of Abraham and which threatened to engulf the whole world, not even excepting their trade. Then they shook their heads so long that it became dangerous.

The Apostles went by the Roman road, along the coast, and when they passed through Samaria, how good it was to convey the salutations from the groups of believers at Tyre and Sidon and Joppa. Persecution had made the plants stronger. Under the

high wind the roots struck deeper, and when the sun of God's favour shone upon them, then leafy bud and blossom unfolded spontaneously. *Their* greenness was not born of jealousy. Paul was wearied to have to fight over again a battle that he had imagined was won and done with. There were Peter, John and James. The audience was doubtless cold, irresponsive and deeply prejudiced. Their zeal for proselytes was largely adulterated by a political enthusiasm, keeping in view additional power and influence, from an accession of numbers and wealth, causing the authorities to extend further privileges. But the address of the simple fisherman, who had no trading axe to grind, was spoken in simple sincerity, and as he reminded the Church that the same gifts had been imparted to themselves as to these Gentiles, hence we must infer that they may be saved even as we. John was led to make his avowal on the same side—the contemplative John—but finally it came to the turn of James—the Lord's brother—to clinch the argument. He avowed that his eyes were opened and he could never shut them again. He would advise putting no hindrances in the Christian converts' path, but simply enjoin upon them not to eat what had been offered to idols ; for to be going to buy from the Temple stalls would bring them into contact with idolatry, and expose them to temptation. They ought also be forbidden to eat things strangled and food compounds of blood, because the blood is the life and all our meals should be sacrificial life poured out. Lastly let them have nothing to do with fornication—that such abstinence was obligatory upon all who aspired to be a Christian. To this the Church agreed, and drew up the brief ordinance. The infant Churches

were told that the men who had troubled them had no commission, no authority. They might now rejoice in their freedom from Jewish bondage. Nothing was done or said in the way of articles of a creed. That the Christ was a Divine Messiah was taken for granted and need not be urged on rational grounds. Intellectual belief is one thing and is powerless to transform. A spiritual renovation is quite another thing, and is due to an apprehension and a conviction of things induced by the workings of the Holy Spirit. This could not be put into a document.

Thus then the infant Church among the Gentiles was launched upon its career through the ages without any Creeds and without any Law. An Apostolic letter, desired to impose upon Gentile converts, gave to the mixed Churches the comforting remission of the initiatory rite of circumcision and repealed absolutely the whole category of the burdensome Levitical requirements, together with the Rabbinical traditions. The Apostolic letter (encyclical) simply gave three injunctions against promiscuous buying in the market, because to do that would involve frequent intercourse with those who were ministering to Pagan worship and thus might entrap them into idolatrous worship again. On the other hand, since Jews abounded in all the principal cities, the Gentile Christians would be led, by the Apostolic interdicts against things strangled and blood, to make their marketing with Jews and proselytes, for whom Jewish legal food was provided.

These statesmanlike provisions were admirably adapted to the circumstances of the hour, but to suppose that they were of eternal obligation would be a mistake. Good Christians may eat black puddings

and hares and rabbits and game without hurting their consciences, not forgetting the Great Sacrifice. There was, however, one injunction in this Apostolic letter which was neither provisional nor conventional. Fornication was and is and for ever a deadly sin. Here we touch essential morality and mark the boundary where man ends and the beast begins. All the false religions minister to the bestial tendencies of man—although in varying degrees, and in some systems involuntary homage is paid to a superior code than that which is allowed to the commonalty. The inseparable union of vice with heathen worship made idolatry the hated thing which Israel, by Divine command, was trained to abhor.

This superiority of the Jew's religion over the other nations was the magnet which drew the proselytes, for the brilliant intellectual gifts, granted to other peoples, were not entirely prostituted to what is base. There were always yearnings after something higher and better, vindicating lineage from a holy source, from them veiled.

The infant Churches at this stage were not furnished with either Creed or Catechism. It must be remembered they came unto the priceless privilege of the sacred oracles. There were the two tables of the Law, the histories of Judah and Israel and the immortal inspirations of the Psalmists and the Prophets. The regular readings from these and exhortations based upon them provided them with a body of Divinity. As to Creeds, definitions of the Divine essence were entirely superseded by the invincible conviction, possessed by the believers that the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, the risen Lord, Son of God, was living and breathing within their souls. Metaphysical definitions

could not be completely satisfactory in any case, but the knowledge of the Divine life could not be denied, any more than the physical. To teach children that they were not dead would be a work of supererogation. Neither could the converts be persuaded that they had not been born again. But, moreover, the Holy Spirit confirmed the Word by signs following. To the happy recipients of the great revelation of God's love to mankind there were added diversity of gifts, bestowed as Divine sovereignty dictated. Miracles of healing, miracles of prophecy, miracles of discernment of spirits, miracles of Divine administration, miracles of casting out devils, and miracles of power to affirm with certainty the record given of His Son by the Father of All in the power of the Spirit, in short, miracles of preaching the Gospel in such wise that men should hear and fear and turn to the Lord.

The whole thing was Divine at the outset, and that victorious aid, granted at the start, was purposely withdrawn after the Apostolic age. Children must learn to walk by leaving the nurse's hand. It was intended that the human should supervene, with the inevitable consequence that failure came and shame and defeat. Heresies sprung up, theological definitions became necessary, directions for worship, directions for family life, directions for every compliance, or non-compliance required by a Church, which was to be ever militant and opposed to the rule of the Prince of the World.

Now as to the fourth commandment. This as it does not stand on the same ground as the moralities, except in so far that a merciful rest for man and beast is involved, the Christian Church could easily transfer the obligation of a weekly rest day from the seventh

to the first. Certainly these primitive arrangements were made under the direct inspiration of the Spirit, and we may say that the first day could be regarded more sacredly than the old : for the rest from creation could not compare in its significance and implications with the day when Death was doomed, and a reprieve purchased for all mankind by the Immortal Ransomer. Moreover, a written command to observe a rest day was rendered unnecessary by the splendid obedience of the Jews to the Sinaitic institution in all the cities. And what is most binding there was the perpetual command given by the Lord Himself to keep the memorial Feast of his Sacrifice and His return. Not alone once in seven days, but "*as often*" as the Ecclesia might ordain it. But since a rest day was given a sabbatic obligation, naturally the celebration of the Memorial Feast would be specially guarded from omission. Hence the infant communities were not so deprived of prescriptive usages as might at first sight be supposed, and most certainly some script containing the proper observance and meaning of the Lord's Supper must have been current, and religiously preserved as one by one churches were planted after the footsteps of the missionary Apostles.

With all this it must have been with the keenest interest that St. Paul surmised the course which was being taken by the Gentile Churches. Everything against them on the human side, everything required from the Divine, for a propitious putting on of the Lord Jesus.

It must have occurred to Paul and Barnabas over and over again that it was their paramount duty to visit the scenes of their glorious battlefield. Mark was impatient to join and to confer copies of His Lord's

biography and acts. But Paul, though so tender in nurturing faith, could not forgive an instance of rebellion in one so young and guilty (though this writer does not share the view) of excusing himself from the labours and perils involved. He had much of the Pope in him, and, indeed, it was fortunate that such was his characteristic. When discipline was called for, his threats were not idle. He warned the Corinthians that he would not spare the recalcitrant. "My Apostolic authority," he told them, "is not a thing of words, but of power. Which shall it be? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in a loving and tender spirit?" (I. Corinthians iv. 20—21) Weymouth. He would even hand over the guilty to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. A man like St. Paul, feeling the full weight of the solemn and sacred behests given him to discharge, could not condone the apparent lightness of his behaviour. If Mark was misjudged and in the Divine eyes vindicated, Paul's sense of responsibility is a lesson to all of us. Who touches the Sacred Ark, let him beware!

So they parted. A grander quarrel never occurred. But we are left without any record of how uncle and nephew sped when they sailed again to Cyprus and, doubtless, to Paphos. What libraries we shall have to read in Heaven! concerning the acts of Barnabas and Mark and, without a doubt, Sergius Paulus would much wonder and greatly deplore the absence of Paul. The miracles and the saving words would delight us. Had Mark bethought him to write them down. But Mark rightly felt quite indisposed for such a task, after recording the glorious words and works of His Lord. Were there no Sergius Paulus' among the

semi-civilized nations who disappeared before Incas or Aztecs were discovered in South America ? Were there no Ethiopian eunuchs among the ancient dynasties that ruled in Africa before it lapsed into barbarism ? And prior to Confucius and Buddha, and prior to Druid, in Europe—Were there not thousands among rulers, warriors and slaves who kept looking into the same old star map of the Heavens, watching and watching through the centuries for a star of Bethlehem ? Without question there were. The light they were not favoured with on earth has since dawned upon them in the other world. The Lamb slain before the foundations of the world has been saving all along, through every generation of God—conscious Humanity.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

SILAS was going on his first missionary journey, taken by Paul. They departed with the commendation and blessing of the Church at Antioch. They would go lovingly together, perhaps all the more so because Silas was chiefly the listener, and the initiative was always taken by the former persecutor. Paul was full of appreciations for the good young man, Mark, apart from his single grievous fault. He was also cheered by having succeeded in resetting Peter upon his proper foundations. He was obliged to deal sharply with him. Peter appears to have left Jerusalem shortly after the promulgation of the Decree, to spy out how the thing was working, and when he had reached Antioch, to his grievous amazement, he found Peter consorting with the Circumcising party and withdrawing himself from the Gentile tables. "A splendid Apostle!" he said to Silas, "especially dear to the Lord, and because of his singular instability given the name of Cephas, as an admonition and an aspiration. May God preserve me from ever partaking of his frailty."

But alas! for human constancy. The rebuker of Peter was on his way to commit a glaring inconsistency when he reaches Lystra and sees Timothy. But we are anticipating! At present the two Evangelists are steadily mounting onwards over Mount Amanus until they reach 3,000 feet above the sea level. Before

they descend to see Tarsus again they begin to consider their appearance and the length of their purses.

“How good those Christians at Antioch have been ! I hope, Silas, they have been equally bountiful to you, but I returned more than half they pressed upon me, lest I should be burdensome. I rejoice to exercise my craft, though so poorly paid, but thank God, it is a healthy trade, and I have had frequently fellow-labourers, in Aquila and Priscilla, who wrought with me in the Gospel. Those saints are good employers, and, in their God-given calling, they and I rejoiced to make the Glad Tidings wholly free. But prepare for hardships, hunger and thirst and persecutions. We are not two chapmen who have the possibility of magical capital to rig markets of commodities without soiling their little fingers by producing them. Labour, even skilled labour, is always at the bottom margin of subsistence, for want of regular employment.”

St. Francis, leaving Assissi, was given four gold pieces. He did not refuse them, but at the bottom of the hill he made haste to relieve himself by presenting them to a beggar. Bad political economy, doubtless, but good for the saint, to lean heavily upon the Unseen Arm. As a matter of fact neither St. Paul, or Silas, nor St. Francis were disappointed, and the same good Providence never abandons the Evangelist. One of them in these modern days, going to serve some Anglican churches, place and time advertised, took up his portmanteau to catch his train, and had no coin in his purse. He was stopped by a friend and enquired if he was not going by train and wanted cash ? He was obliged to say it was so.

"Well," replied the friend, "I had a vision last night in my sleep. I saw you distinctly, and I saw myself giving you gold. Here is some and I hope it is sufficient."*

Paul sank into a reverie as he approached his native city, and when he entered it, he was not long in being "cut" by his acquaintances. His mother had long mourned her "lost" son; and his indefatigable zeal in making disciples only widened the breach between her, his sister and all old friends of his father. He was rewarded, however, by the love and reverence he received from the new family he had created. He was not long before faces lit up by joy and thankfulness, pulled him in this direction and in that, making it difficult to get along. From under the shade of a tent, that he himself had fashioned, emerged a woman, selling water melons and was radiantly happy to encounter him unexpectedly. She was emptying her basket into the wallets of both, but they steadfastly refused, except for such quantum as would gratify her. When she looked after them with wonderful affection, Paul whispered, "Quite a poor woman, but rich in faith."

Another relative passed him with a gesture of scorn. His own father had been in a good position, and his wayward son, having thrown away all his hopeful future, was now reduced to the despised caste of hand operatives; ready to bear the penalty, since labour began, of being useful and, consequently, despised and unrewarded. Added to this he had quitted the ancestral faith (though Paul would say he was fulfilling it) and, therefore, he was doubly worthy of being "cut" off from his father's friends. But the slight of the world did not hurt

* "Christian World, 28th April, 1910."

him. What would really hurt him would be to see man-worship and respectability stifling the genuine cross bearing to which the new converts were called.

In reaching Tarsus they had passed through the pass where Alexander and Cicero had been before them. Now the conquests of the cross was their objective, and the administration of an Empire, such as Cicero could never make permanent. They were travelling now to confirm the Churches, to leave the decree with all its consolation, and, as they walked or rode, or led sumpter mules, the two Apostles became increasingly attached to each other. The strong and healthy vitality of Paul's spirit quickened all of God that dwelt in the soul of Silas.

The way that the Apostles now took was through the Cilician Gates towards Derbe, Lystra and Iconium and Pisidian Antioch, a way that *Caractacus* was conducted to Rome—a captive. That prisoner could never know that the subjugation of his island kingdom was but one step towards making England the Great Missionary Country, by whom the entire world was to be subjugated by the Christian Faith. For amid the legionaries which planted the Roman eagles, there were possibly several soldiers, who learnt to wield the sword of the spirit and to sow the first seeds of Divine truth.

The Evangelists arrived at length at Derbe, in their Archdiaconal or Episcopal visitation, and the first question would be, "Where is Barnabas?" Paul would have to introduce Silas and to explain that he had gone to Cyprus. The absence of beloved Barnabas cast a shade upon the greeting company, and Silas was unknown to them. But the modest Silas soon ingratiated himself into their esteem and no rude prying questions were put to St. Paul as to the cause of the

separation that had taken place. It was a delightful season, the Church had prospered, thrived, in spite of secret disfavour and open persecution. The wonder grew, as they visited one Fellowship after another, how they remained constant and increased. They had no New Testament Scriptures, no Liturgies, no Creeds, no definitions of doctrines, no dogmas, and yet all uniting in speaking the same language of Christian faith and pursuing the same aim, to extend discipleship and engaged upon the same sacred task of becoming conformed to the mind and will of the Master. But we shall suggest, later on, how exceptional and provisional it all was. Meantime the two Evangelists proceed to Lystra—the scene of the stoning. There was no avoiding of painful experiences. There are people who would skirt a town, where their experiences were painful and would vow not to re-enter it. St. Paul, on the contrary, was eager to be there again. He had not forgotten the tearful face which lent over him when consciousness was returning. To see Timothy, and Eunice and Lois, St. Paul hastened to Lystra.

The greeting was warm, despite the cold shade of the absence of Barnabas. "What is he doing? Preaching the glad news in Cyprus. Alone? No! he has got his nephew, Mark, with him. We don't know Mark. Oh! he is a fine young fellow. But tell me about Timothy." There was much to tell about Timothy—in his praise.

Timothy, fore-ordained to be a founder and bishop of the early Church, was universally beloved, and it did not enter his mind to aim at earthly distinctions, or the acquisition of wealth, nor was he content to live simply as a private Christian—a flower

bedded in a garden. No ! he possessed the ardent soul which constantly urged him to declare the glad tidings of great joy and to bring illuminations to those who hitherto dwelt in darkness. When St. Paul proposed to take him on his journeys, no young man could be gladder. He was undoubtedly forewarned, by a revelation of the risks and sufferings which would deter any except those who were ready to yield up their all to the Lord. But these plain statements were not likely to cause him to hang back ; neither did his mother, or grandmother, or his father, pagan though he was, dissuade him from his projected career. They all gave him their blessing and Paul received him as a precious gift. Nothing, therefore, was wanting to fit him for the Apostleship, absolutely nothing. But an extraordinary obstacle presented itself to the mind of Paul—the last man in the world to have entertained it.

* * * * *

Silas went about in his quiet modest way to look after the members of the Fellowship. He was increasingly liked and they compared him in many respects to Barnabas, whose memory was fragrant. after a long round of visits and attending a meeting where a few were accustomed to gather for prayer, and Silas exhorted them with much acceptance, he sought his lodgings and found Paul still away. He had scarcely adjusted himself on a couch when Paul returned, and met Silas with the words.

“ I have just circumcised him.”

“ Who ? ” exclaimed Silas.

“ Timothy ! ”

Silas had jumped up and stood facing Paul in speechless astonishment. “ You circumcised

him!" said Silas slowly, and then sank upon the couch.

Paul also threw himself upon a couch and remained silent, as though not quite easy in his mind. He closed his eyes.

After a while Silas resumed, "I thought that your contention at Jerusalem and at Antioch was that Circumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the Commandments of God."

"Right, Silas; but you see his father is a Greek."

"But," said Silas, "his mother was not, she was a staunch daughter of Abraham, and her mother before her, both of them cherishing Israel's hope, which we know has come to us in Jesus Christ."

"Right again, Silas, quite right."

"Why, then, did you circumcise him?"

"Because—because—I want him to help me in the ministry and to be acceptable in the Synagogues."

"*Acceptable!*" With scorn in his voice, Silas sat upright and stared with extended and flashing eyes. "*Acceptable,*" he repeated with a double dose of scorn, "You will never make the Cross acceptable but to broken-hearted sinners, and the elders in the Synagogues are not such. The Cross stains all human pride, pricks the bubble of self-approval, strips the shivering soul of its last garment and places it under the burning eyes of the Searcher of Hearts. How can you make it acceptable to the self-righteous Jew?"

Paul was silent and stirred uneasily.

Silas resumed. "I did so admire you, Paul, when Peter—the 'rock' began to melt again, in presence of the false brethren who came from Jerusalem to spy out our liberty, and was then eating and drinking with the Gentiles, and, lo! and behold, was found with-

drawing himself to get reinstated in their good graces. You perceived the crisis, its momentous character, for even the noble and excellent Barnabas was being carried away. You then rose at once, before the assembled Church, and publicly rebuked our dear Peter, saying, 'If you, a born Jew, feel it now right to eat and drink with the Gentiles, why do you oblige the Gentiles to conform the Jewish practices? Nullifying the decision that you yourself recommended the Church to adopt.' Oh, brother Paul, be consistent! You said to me only yesterday, 'The grace of God alone could make Peter a success, but under my rebuke the melting rock became crystalline again.' To-day you have abandoned all the positions you were defending. Who are these spies? What have you to fear from them? You remind me, Timothy's father was a Greek. That was the very reason why you should *not* have circumcised him. His beautiful character was known, you should have jealously preserved him untouched, and boasted of him in all the Synagogues, as proof that circumcision was nothing and uncircumcision was nothing but keeping the Commandments of God, which alone Jesus Christ can absolve us from breaking and give us grace to attempt more successfully." Paul was still silent, and then in a low voice said, "I did it as a matter of policy."

"Policy!" shouted Silas. "I stand for *principle*. Principle is rock, policy is untempered mortar."

It does not become *us*, however, to indulge in criticisms of that kind. The glorious Apostle lived in such an exalted plane of Divine permeation that to talk of error and censure should die upon our lips. We are

utterly unworthy of entertaining presumptions against any portion of his conduct, when the main track of his life transcends so hopelessly our wretched imitations. Even in dismissing the subject, we feel we need to cry mercy from Heaven for venturing to say that Paul's brilliant inspiration may have suffered a temporary eclipse in circumcising Timothy.

Lystra detained the Apostles for a few days for a very good reason. But when Silas went again among the people, several enquired solicitously, "What is the matter with Paul? He has lost his bold confident tone, and frequently hangs his head. He had 'words' with Barnabas. Had he words with you?"

"No"! would Silas reply with a smile. "No! I fear it was the other way, but I was only zealous for principle." But all the neighbours remarked how Paul and his son in the faith became more and more inseparable. Who does not know how a wrong, inflicted unworthily, or only ignorantly or accidentally, invests the sufferer with unequalled magnetic power. The desire, the effort, the hope to repair it induces tenderness on both sides. We sinners wrong God, the degree of our sense of this creates a corresponding tenderness and reproachfulness, which moves God instantly towards us and we to Him, and revelations ultimately bind Heaven to Earth. It is from an ocean of lovelessness that love itself is born. Evil creates Good and discords are resolved in harmony. It is this lost, erring world that perpetuates the unconsuming fire of God's love. God so loved it that He offered His own Son in exchange for it — and when the exchange takes place He brings many sons to glory.

Meantime, Paul and Timothy are knit into one soul Paul gets out of his dolours, His old bold confident

tone returns, Timothy and he have been clearing up some very intimate affairs and there is also the best understanding with Silas. All the Church turns out to bid farewell. Silas has become a great favourite, while Paul is more revered than ever. The chapter of Lystra is closed, it had blots and it had tears, and now all is white and bright. On to Iconium again those three. The cripple running after them and cheering.

CHAPTER XXV.

PARENTHETICAL PERIOD OF THE SPIRIT'S DIRECT ACTION, WITHIN THE INFANT CHURCHES.

It would be a great mistake, I conceive, to imagine that the position of the newly planted Churches at this period was meant to be perpetuated, throughout the long interval before the Lord's return, and that we should regard their order and their organism of work and worship, as models, not to be departed from, nor admitting of improvement, or adaptation to changed circumstances.

At this juncture, Divine action of an abnormal character, we would reverently suggest, was demanded, for without it the new religion could not grow. But subsequently human probation, was to proceed under conditions demonstrating human insufficiency and yet, after confessed failure, to issue victoriously. We may again say, reverently, that the Divine wisdom contemplated to prepare the Church for its glorious manifestation in the Millennial period. And that as regards the World, its confessed failure to accomplish Divine ends by political methods was designed, and the world's contemptuous indifference and hostility to the Church was to be an essential element in its perfecting. Hence we repeat the condition of the Ecclesia at this juncture was entirely unparalleled and never meant to be final.

Its Government was, for the time, to supersede, in a great measure much that could be effected by inspired intellect, inspired literature, inspired utterance on

the part of converted men, selected from the Pagan and Jewish adherents. The Holy Spirit qualified various members to teach, prophecy, heal, administer and judge, and maintain the liveliest exercises of faith, hope and charity. All was done for them, because at the outset, a more direct, immediate action of the Holy Spirit was required.

The providential design was certainly not to keep the Church in leading strings, either as to the objects of its faith, or the organism it needed to evolve.

The Church was to grow in capacity, to be trained, disciplined and fed, so as to become an instrument, mediately of permeating all authority and become an executant of the Divine will in judging and saving men. She was to become gradually self-furnished with the Apparati suitable for its success in winning its way among the ignorant and perishing multitude. Her instruments being her symbolic sacraments, but mainly, disciples, sanctified and endued by the Holy Spirit and, undertaking to discharge those functions which the Holy Spirit directly and abnormally exercised, for a temporary purpose at the outset.

Out of the nurses' arms, the Church began to walk and then to run, but only for a season. The world was thickly planted by the Devil's gardening, and when the Church began to hew a path, the Anti-christ used the Pagan Governments' to stop the way. Alas ! in time she began to borrow the Devil's axe, and ultimately began to plant a thorn hedge, higher than his, so that the thirsting nations were kept back, and the wells of salvation were sold, which were meant to be offered freely to the world.

Since then she has washed her robes ; and, if not standing in quite white penitence, she has been en-

trusted again to hold the candle of the Lord, and from her, the only illumination, mediately can proceed.

When the cycle of her probation has been accomplished we may look forward to a time when the more direct and immediate action of the Spirit may supervene—when the Church will again be granted supernatural aids, as in her infant period. Christendom is relapsing to Paganism. The miraculous must reappear, both for the Church and the world's sake. The Church has to confess her utter helplessness apart from her Lord, and the World shows the utter fatuity of building new Jerusalem without Divine foundations. Poor, beggared, bankrupt, defrauded World ! Putting all its money upon social reconstruction, and losing absolutely ! For utmost scientific achievements in material successes leave it starving, on account of the remnants of a Diviner appetite, which craves for another food, for man cannot live by bread alone.

There are many reasons why the miraculous may be expected :

(a) The judicial withdrawal of the Holy Spirit's former triumphs on account of the Church's faithlessness.

(b) The occurrence of the predicted decline of faith in regard to the foundations of the Christian faith.

(c) The fidelity of the Remnant Church, which, during the antecedent period, will be tried and rewarded by a supernatural display of the Spirit's diversified gifts, confounding the Church's adversaries and causing the persecuted witnesses to rejoice with trembling, for the precious deliverances granted in their extremity.

Then it will be seen how vain, after all, the triumphs

of science are to achieve the moral elevation of man, or to relieve the labouring classes from the injuries and perils which the advance of scientific civilization entails. For human agency in connection with the employment of the Mighty Genii, which the inventors create, is indispensable, while to control them is not always possible, and contingent failure is commensurately disastrous. It will ever be questioned whether man's control over nature has brought him nearer to a happier, freer and securer position, as a toiler, amid dread material forces. If life is safeguarded in one direction, it is imperilled in another. Machine production is a Moloch, and as for the developments of "business," they have added immensely to the ranks of the dispensables and their incomes, while poisoning with care and despair the ranks of the absolutely indispensable.

Happiness ! It is never on sale, no earthly ore contains it. It is to be discovered where none could anticipate it. It is to be found with strange companionship and amid circumstances accounted most distressful. Religion alone holds the secret, and the Church alone can verify the recipe.

Paul and Silas with their feet cramped in the stocks, in the core of a filthy Roman prison, sang so blithe a song that all the other prisoners were kept awake. Animal socialism could never strike that key. The Apostles of animal socialism consecrate their energies to a cause that never pays. For when Love is slain at the door step, the Angel of happiness will never enter. A destroying Angel will come instead. Suicides are startlingly frequent among them, but the Divine Socialists lean upon the heart of the Eternal Love, with whom is the Eternal life.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY (CONTINUED).

WHILE the cheering of the cripple of Lystra was still in their ears the Evangelists determined to break into new ground. They always had acted under inspirations as to the way they should take. So they entered upon a previously untrodden path ; blithely, cheerfully, rejoicing to be commissioned to carry good tidings to every creature.

They were traversing Galatia and Phrygia, when the Spirit made His will known that they were not to enter Bythinia. The Bythinians were to learn the Gospel in the other world, not now ; so ever obedient to the Divine impression, they spent days and nights and weeks without planting any Churches. But without doubt they had many a conversation with wayfarers—Jews and Gentiles, and years afterwards what Paul and Silas and Timothy had sown would spring up and bear fruit.

It was an enormous itinerary. They must have been zig-zagging for 400 miles before they came to Mysia. How much we have lost ! Then the Spirit dictated a halt. They were not to go further north into Bythinia, but to diverge westward, and still westward, until they reached the regions of Ancyra.

They had proposed nothing of the kind, but they were led to a seaport *Troas*. How blessed is it to be required to make no plans, to have no uncertainties as to duty, not to be plagued about the relative importance of things to be done : which to take first

and what it is allowable to postpone. Why do Christians bother themselves in that way? All they have to do is to obey the Divine impressions granted to those who humbly ask for guidance and are prepared to implicitly obey. This plain dealing is not intended to be confined to the preaching of the Gospel, it is meant to be the privilege of every Christian in every walk of life; nothing is common, all is high and Divine. The Holy Spirit concerns Himself or would, if solicited, concern Himself with any, the pettiest detail of private or public manifestation.

The Apostles had the sea before them, but they had no idea in what direction they were to sail. Their voices said nothing. So, retiring for the night, they had no squabbles as to what was best to do. They were not men of the world, running about for tips as to the best thing to do, and unable to decide for themselves. All they had to do was to pray and wait. This is the blessed privilege of Christian faith. No care, no anxious considerations as to consequences (only for others), the only care to trust and obey.

The voices came, or rather a vision, in the night-time. It is perfectly idle for sceptics to question either the reality or the supernatural character of what St. Paul was given to see.

Hundreds and thousands of individual Christians, in modern days, could testify to similar things. Of course disbelievers have no visions. It is Christian faith that reveals—unlocks all the treasure house of God's particular Providences.

We should also remind Christian readers that night is the special time for the most sacred and important revelations to be made. In the night when stars become visible, it is then, when the way seems dark, that

stars of guidance declare themselves. And, after a sweet night's rest, and tired nature is refreshed, the Christian feels and knows that Angels have been whispering in his ear the duties that await him to undertake on the first hours of the new day. The mind is more active, more peaceful, more happy, in the early morning than at any other portion of the 24 hours. Up Christian! and let not the thundering urgencies that demand immediate attention find your soul undressed and unprepared by exercises of prayer, reading and meditation prior to presuming to deal with them, uncounselled and unguided. That is to say, that when such counsel of perfection is constantly aimed at, then when the sudden and unexpected invades the regular order, the soul finds itself prepared beforehand for any exigency.*

Paul was recognised as the leader, and to him was the vision vouchsafed. "In the night there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, 'Come over into Macedonia and help us.' " And after he had seen the vision, *immediately* (how precious was that instantaneous obedience without cavilling)) "Immediately we" (Silas and Timothy had no vision but recognised Paul's guidance implicitly) "endeavoured to go into Macedonia, confidently inferring that God had called us to proclaim the good news to the people there. Therefore, loosing from Troas, they came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis, and from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a Colony." Here, then, their first work lay. Bythinia

*The late Hercules Dickenson, Dean of the Chapel Royal, Dublin, rose at 3.30 a.m., and breakfasted at 4. Only by such saving method could he prepare his Lectures on Pastoral Theology and meet his other multiplied claims ere the first knocks of his parishioners assailed his door, and continued with disturbing frequency.

and Mysia must wait. There were others to be served first. Hungering and thirsting souls at Philippi, which the Lord meant to satisfy. Most likely it was the first voyage that Silas and Timothy had taken, and great must have been the impression made. Paul signified to them that Samothracia and Neapolis were to be neglected, but no sooner had they arrived at Philippi, that they felt, or I mean Paul, the leader, felt, that they had reached their proper bourne.

They had been led to go to Europe—ever westward—but they were to stay whither they had now come “certain days.” The Sabbath was drawing near. Paul held to the rule of first of all carrying the good news to the Jews and afterwards to the Gentiles. Hence they commenced by waiting an opportunity to find an assembly of Jews, although the men of Macedonia were meant to be visited in due order.

Paul had ascertained that it was the custom to have morning prayer by a river-side on the Sabbath, at a place where prayer was wont to be made and they sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. It is to be observed that by the use of the pronoun “we,” we are made aware of the presence with the Apostles of the writer of the Acts.

St. Luke, the undoubted author, was accompanying them, a circumstance that gives the highest testimony to the trustworthiness of the record. Precisely at what time and place he joined the party he has not told us, it would seem that he had been engaged in verifying the circumstances of our blessed Lord’s life in Palestine, and that, providentially led, he encountered the Missionaries upon this eventful journey and determined to join, while also making for his Gentile home. The historian and the physician, no less than

the Evangelist, became an ally of the highest value, though his modesty led him to retire behind the associates whose doings he was meaning to perpetuate.

We must then associate Luke with the Apostles on their first proclamation of the Gospel in Europe. Nothing is so natural and beautiful as the story of the first convert to the Christian Church in Macedonia. The Jews of the Dispersion were evidently animated by a genuine and enlightened piety, for it would appear that in the want of a synagogue they regularly assembled, women more than men, outside the gate on the banks of the Gaggitas.

No striking ceremonies, no gorgeous vestments, no music, save such as the vocal chords provided. Nevertheless, the spirit of the descendants of Abraham demanded and was gratified by a form of worship of Presbyterian plainness.

And the freedom that was allowed to the gathering was no less remarkable. Luke, Paul and Silas and Timothy began to talk with the women who had come together, and found no difficulty in engaging their attention. They were not the idle and worthless slaves of fashion, and although one of them was a dealer in purple goods, it was no subject of feminine apparel that caused Lydia to open her mouth.

On the contrary, her ears and her heart were open and attent to hear what the chief speaker, Paul, was holding forth upon. Lydia stood in that hour for the millions upon millions of the heathen and the unchristianized denizens of Christendom, who are waiting to have their dumb call answered. The hour had struck for Lydia. "The Lord opened her heart, so that she gave attention to what Paul was saying." When she and her household had been baptized, she urged us,

saying, "If in your judgment I am a believer in the Lord, come and stay at my house," and she made them go."

The Baptist position in the controversy as to the proper subjects for Baptism manifestly fails to satisfactorily account for the baptism of the entire household of Lydia and subsequently for the same in regard to the Philippian jailer.

The solemn, nay awful consequences which depend upon every separate act of a single individual needs to be enforced. No human being can think, speak, feel, or act without really, vitally, and eternally affecting the whole human family. All our actions are done vicariously. The federal relationship, the corporate oneness of the race destroys every doctrinal position based upon isolated individualism.

Lydia opened her heart, and by consequence all her babes had their hearts disposed to do as their mother did in due time. What did St. Paul declare as to the marriage relationship? If one was a believer and was joined to an unbeliever, the children were holy. The principle comes to the surface in every page of Holy Scripture. For bane and for blessing we are one. We cannot avoid sharing in the judgment pronounced against sin, although individually we may be guiltless. But we are more than compensated by the Acts of our Lord, in which we had no share at all. If we are doomed to suffer on account of a national sin, notwithstanding that we individually protested against it, though unavailingly, we, with equal certainty, reap the happy results of a Nation's Act of righteousness. We are one loaf and it is idle to talk about crumbs.

Every moral conquest achieved by a single citizen helps to guard our shores, and would give victory over

a wanton assault by our foes. Every faithless reliance simply, upon gigantic material engines of destruction, and an unholy use of them without just cause, would render them utterly useless. It is the Heavens that rule and Hell is perpetually defeated in the end.

How clearly was the providential leading of God displayed in Lydia opening her house, as well as her heart. What a delightful time she had with those four. Better than certain dry pages of Holy writ was the conversation of Paul and Luke and Silas, while Timothy, as became a young man, kept his ears open, when his mouth was modestly closed. We are not told whether Lydia had a husband alive. It is enough to know that an infinite blessing came upon that house, and that single act of Lydia has blessed all of us. We are all more ready to receive Jesus, because *her* heart was opened. Countless thousands have copied literally her example and begged Evangelists to accept hospitalities. So every single good deed echoes through the ages, and every member of the human family, who wilfully will break away from God's Covenant of mercy in Christ delays the triumphant issue of the Great Vicarious Sufferer's Sacrifice. It is the general interest of the inhabitants of the globe to suppress sin and to exalt righteousness. There is no such criminal as the lawless, Godless man. He is the common enemy. Capital punishment must never be abolished. What is wanted to-day is to *add* to the offences of which it is at present the penalty. Maudlin Mercy would harbour the worst germs of disease, and refuse to break the bottles of poison. The diseased members must be cut off for the sake of the body. When the Divine rule is inaugurated, as it shortly will

be, it will be preceded by a wholesale destruction of the enemies of God.

The happy band of Christians had no idea of giving up the Jewish practices which are indispensable to all true religion. They were on their way—Paul, Luke, Silas and Timothy—to the place where prayer was wont to be made, when a slave girl, possessed of a spirit of Divination, followed close behind Paul and the rest of them, crying aloud, “These men are the bond servants of the most high God, and are proclaiming to all the way of salvation.” This she persisted in for a considerable time, until Paul, wearied out, turned round and said to the Spirit, “I command you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her.” And it came out immediately.

Now it appears that this Demoniac was accustomed to bring her owners large profits by telling fortunes, and that her power entirely ceased when the evil spirit was cast out. Causing her owners to be madly enraged against Paul, and siezing him and Silas they dragged them off to the magistrates in the public Square.

We pause for a moment to mark how incontestably supernatural power is here in evidence. First of all there is Demoniactal possession; secondly, power to tell fortunes in such a manner as that people were ready to pay highly for the useful information gained from the unhallowed source; thirdly, the demon, though evil, was constrained to testify to the truth of Paul’s mission and message; fourthly, Paul was able to command the evil spirit to depart from the slave girl.

Now what has the sceptic to say to the *bona fides* of the writer of this artless account? He was an eye and ear witness to the facts, and yet every portion

of this piece of history was charged with abnormal elements. Is there no such thing as demoniacal possession? Missionaries knew well that in Heathen lands it is *normal*. Can no evil spirit be cast out? Missionaries can report that at the name of Jesus, demons depart and the victims abide in a blessed freedom from their plague. Missionaries can testify that the possessed either are excited to frenzy by the presence of a holy servant of God, or are abased and crouch in fear. The great mystery is that this demoniac should be constrained to preach truly the fact that Paul and his company were bondservants of the most High God, and were proclaiming the way of salvation.

It is not amazing, however, but a blessed fact, if the reader will arise to the recognition of the Immortal truth that evil and good are alike the servants of God, and, while the latter is ministered to by the former, evil is fated itself to be destroyed when its ministry has accomplished its end. Meantime, glorify the power that Paul was able to exert in so happy a manner. Unlike some scientific demonstrations in halls of learning, the experiments sometimes fail, the operators not being expert. Paul never failed, nor Peter. Whatever they attempted was brilliantly successful!

But while the Evangelists were doing such good work, they were now to become the victims of a cruel maltreatment. In the enduring of which, however, they had a great reward—a reward adequate, and sufficing to soul winners. For, at the end of the long chain of supernatural events, there was a whole family enriched by the avowed discipleship of the Philippian jailor, whose faith and the fruits of it brought to his household baptism in the jail itself, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. This was what

the man of Macedonia stood by Paul's couch to beseech. Either Luke or Timothy went to another part of the city, or Paul and Silas were more prominent in the work, or again, the angry exploiters of the slave demoniac were afraid to drag the whole four Evangelists upon a charge of creating a great disturbance in the city. They were Jews and were "teaching customs which they, as Romans, were not permitted to adopt or practice. The crowd, too, joined in the outcry against them, till at length the Prætors ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods : breaking the skin and causing blood to run in streams, and well-nigh breaking their bones." The executioners were accustomed to fly upon the victims at the word of command and tear off their garments, making them taterdemonials. Then the magistrates bade the jailor to keep them safely, who, having received an order like that, lodged them in the inner prison and secured their feet in the stocks. The "inner prison" was the core and centre of the whole building : designed not only for security, but also as an aggravation of their punishment. A vile place is here, no sanitary convenience was regarded, and, moreover, the "stocks" were expressly framed to make already wounded and bleeding bodies tortured by agonising attitudes. Thus, thrust and locked in, the two Christian confessors were in a situation to raise their voices in hymns of praise ! after the endurance of many hours of horrible anguish. The Spirit triumphed over it all. The brave and constant souls, charged with love and fidelity, could smile at the wailing flesh. Triumphant songs ! be sure ! and with such fervour and such power and such music, too, that the prisoners could not choose but hear. The sounds penetrated several

walls, and all the prisoners stopped their oaths and their obscene tales, all trying to make out the words, perhaps Psalm lxii. 1—3.

“My soul truly waiteth still upon God, for of Him cometh my salvation. He verily is my strength and my salvation. He is my defence, so that I shall not greatly fall. How long will ye imagine mischief against every man. Ye shall be slain, all the sort of you. Yea, as a tottering wall shall ye be, and like a broken hedge.” Or Psalm lx. 4—5. “Thou hast given a token for such as fear thee: that they may triumph because of the truth. Therefore were thy beloved delivered, help me with Thy right hand and hear me.”

Then came the earthquake! a double bass rolled into the harmony. The bowels of the earth were moved. The walls of the prison began to totter. The hedge was broken through, all the doors flew open, and the chains fell off every prisoner. What a rough Angel was that earthquake, which shook the shoulder of the jailor and bade him arise to newness of life. That was his birthday. Yesterday he shackled his prisoners and thrust their feet in the stocks. That same midnight all his own chains fell from him and his own wayward feet were set upon the paths of Zion. “A light! a light!” Yes, the great light was coming, the light that lighteth every man. Paul was proclaiming it.

The jailor had drawn his sword and was on the point of killing himself when Paul shouted loudly to him, “Do thyself no harm! We are all here.” Then, with his flickering lamp the jailor sprang in and fell trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas. And bringing them out of the inner prison, he exclaimed, “O, Sirs, what

must I do to be saved ? ” They replied : “ Believe on the Lord Jesus, and both thou and thy household will be saved.” And they told the Lord’s message to him as well as to all who were in his house. Then he took them, even at that time of night, washed the blood and dirt from their wounds, and he and all his household immediately received baptism, and bringing the Apostles up into his house, he spread a meal for them, and was filled with gladness, with his whole household, his faith resting on God.

What strange and momentous scenes taking place in Philippi ! the place where the Roman Empire had its genesis, and where an Empire vaster and mightier far also had its early beginnings !

It commenced with an earthquake within the soul of a humble Roman official, and in one night an entire household, the second already, was baptised into the Triune God.

All through the night, questions, answers, explanations went on, from the head of the household and all its members. Under the Spirit’s inspiration and guidance, according to the amount of culture and the age of each, children and servants became so rapidly qualified for incorporation with the Church and the living God that having gone to sleep as pagans ere morning they were humble Christian believers. And being so, instead of seeking to return to their couches, they sought to be baptised forthwith. There were the simple requisites for the ordinance. Water, necessarily within the walls of a prison. And Apostles commissioned to welcome the Neophytes into the spacious bosom of the new-born Ecclesia, for further teaching and training.

The converts would be taught that the ordinance

of baptism was only a sign of a great reality, the washing away of sin by the exercise of faith in Him who subjected Himself to sins' penalty and made possible a reconciliation between the transgressor, immutably doomed unless, and God's immutable hatred of sin, and by the sinner so acquiring the vision of God's love, that he learns to hate sin as God hates it. Further, the Neophyte would be shown that the waters of death were to yield up again the buried believer, unto the glorious resurrection unto life. This faith operating within to purify, the Holy Spirit would pursue its regenerating influence towards progressive sanctification, in the proportion of faith.

It is difficult for us to understand how there can be a vicarious faith and a vicarious justification, apart from a special call,—a special and individual repentance and faith, but there is no escape from the cases of Lydia and the Philippian jailor. There is a giving and a receiving all the world over, and the fact of Household Faith and Household Salvation gives an awful sanction to marriage and against divorce. At the same time it alleviates the mystery of the age-long tenure of slavery—chattel slavery—gave chances to the master of being able to devolve upon the slave the blessings of salvation, when the master became a bond slave to Christ. The faith of Abraham went on enfranchising all his descendants. The death of Christ goes on for ever working redemption for those who never vicariously suffered. What we are perpetually encountering is that Truth is to be found in the acceptance of two contradictories. Personal salvation due to an individual call, and also salvation conferred on grounds of federal relationship. But how can men be justified by proxy,

repent by proxy, and believe to the saving of their souls by proxy? How can sanctification and peace and love ensue on proxy processes and thus dead souls awake to life? It seems to be impossible, but we may be permitted to suggest that myriads of facts go to show that *Salvation is granted in different degrees*. There is a lower and a higher. Not in the way of works of supererogation, so called, but that *Salvation is progressive*, and while the Federal Saviour rejoices in a full Salvation, those whom his Headship may cover receive a Salvation inferior in degree, and far from the fulness to which every man is summoned.

Also there is no such thing as spiritual insolation. Soul action occurs in a medium—a spiritual ether—which connects and bonds every member of the human family. Scientists tell us that the physical ether behaves like lead, but faintly resembles that density, while also it resembles steel, but faintly in that hardness. How shall the human race escape from being saved? In the centre of that medium Christ manifested the Godhead, died, rose, and pleads. And in that medium, which is the path of light, the home of electric energy, and of infinite potentialities; restless waves, dense as lead or hard as steel, are for ever asking to be employed in propagating the saving words and acts of the Redeemer of mankind.

If churches become petrified under the absence of the holy emotions which the preaching of the Cross engenders, other churches hundreds of miles away cannot entirely escape the contagion. Where faith faints and holiness halts and love loiters, sister or daughter churches imbibe the same sleeping draught. Where scepticism is not expelled, and negatives supplant positive convictions, the frost that sets

in strikes with icy fingers the former warm impulses, and such churches become ashamed of what was their earlier glory; the chill propagates itself and unchecked atrophy stops the beating heart. The same is true of commercial morality. If in the North Exchanges become dens of thieves: In the South also rascality lifts up its head. Western villainies leap oceans and the East forgets its rules and means to break through commendable restraints.

If Congo villainies and Angola oppressions are not to be ended, similar iniquities will be started in similar regions. The converse of course equally holds. Let a nation revere its Christian conscience and other nations will be moved to abandon an evil intention. Blessed Loaf of Humanity! There is a horrible competition in armaments. The way to alter that is to partially disband our armies and dismantle our fleets—that would *not* be the weakening of our defence. It would mean heroic faith and implicit reliance upon a faithful Creator. The nation that furnished the first example will be the first in all national supremacies.

A particular case of soul influence may be referred to. There was an evangelist in South Wales who gave birth to a remarkable revival movement. He broke down from unguarded extravagances, and there ensued an arrest of the movement he had started. Disregarding the injunction of St. Paul, "Let every man abide in the calling in which he was called," the young collier left the pits for good and all, and left also his sacrificial efforts to plead in tears for the salvation of his brothers. A suspension of his labours for a reasonable recuperation was, of course, justified, and resumed activity on a plane

of equal lofty devotion was to be anticipated ; but contemporaneously with the abatement of his own fervour and consecration, the temperature of evangelistic zeal was lowered in the regions where his fire was most conspicuous. And with the abandonment of his path of sacrifice, his revival movement was also stayed, and his determination to quit it openly announced.

It is not too late for him to return to the pits—to share the forbidding and perilous labours in which the Holy Spirit of God shared His power with him—in the place where scant rewards rule just as they did in Asia Minor when Paul worked at tent-making. It is not to be expected that great spiritual power should be manifested when the pit was exchanged for culture, leisure and entrance into middle class privileges, where labour is jealously banned. Since he has been lured from the paths of renunciation, his career as a Revivalist is ended. Like as a meteor he flashed, and as a meteor he disappears. But his eclipse broods over his early planting and perishes under his poor example.

Oh ! you Reader, know you not that your individual failure and misconduct weakens the whole host of God, while every triumph quickens the hearts of the armies of Israel.

* * * * *

Now we are compelled to inquire why Paul did not use his right of Roman citizenship to exempt him from the brutal assault made upon his person and the inner incarceration ?

I think it was because Silas was not a Roman citizen. Had Paul been alone, as he did on the steps of Antonia, he would have claimed his privilege in bar of scourging at Philippi, and doubtless saved his own skin. But

what about Silas ? Was *he* to be scourged and Paul to be the witness of his colleague's sufferings ? No ! He would certainly share with him, go to prison, or to death, if necessary—his patent of citizenship would not cover his friend. But next morning, after both had a taste of what Apostleship involved, without complaining, but rejoicing to suffer for such a Lord as they both served—Paul remembering the Divine institution the State, and the important services to pure religion and undefiled it was designed (and itself only competent) to subserve—immediately undertook to teach the Magistrates their duty.

“What” ! exclaimed Paul, when the lictors came with orders from the Prætors to let these men go and bid them go in peace. “No, indeed, we don't mean to go without an apology. After cruelly beating us in public, without trial, Roman citizens though we are, they have thrown us into prison and are they now going to send us away privately ? Never ! Let them come in prison and fetch us out.”

It was a bold, if not an impudent remonstrance, but only another instance which we are frequently reminded of in ancient history that there is greater individual freedom (apart from the slave class) under a despotism than under our precious representative institutions. *Civis Romanus Sum* made the magistrates shake in their shoes. And the shame-faced Prætors actually came and apologised to them : bring-

NOTE.—The magistrates had, by their conduct in this matter, violated three important laws—the infraction of which was in general treated with so much severity by the Roman Government that those colonial magistrates had ample cause for the alarm with which they received the Apostles' message (1) In punishing them without trial they had violated the law, which strictly forbade any citizen to be punished unheard ; (2) They had also infringed the Valerian law, which forbade that any Roman citizen should be bound ; and (3) they had acted against the Sempronian or Porcian law, which exempted a citizen from being punished with rods. —(*Kilto's Bible in loco.*).

ing them out, and begging them to leave the city. This was what the State was good for, in the establishing of the Lord's Kingdom, sheltering and protecting all but the slave class.

But let not the reader suppose that Labour's day is never to dawn, the red rim of the brightening horizon is right round the world.

Then Paul and Silas, having come out of prison, went to Lydia's house, and after seeing the brethren and encouraging them they left Philippi.

We recur to the vision of the man of Macedonia. For what special purpose was the neglect of Neapolis ? Why must the Apostolic band stop at Philippi ? Are we not warranted in suggesting that the object was the conversion of the Philippian jailor and his household. Observe the course of the Divine providence in the selection of individuals, from all classes, kings, Governors, lictors, soldiers, sailors and jailors, merchants, professionals, lawyers, fishermen, beggars, lepers, demoniacs—pretty comprehensive, but sparsely from slaves. Observe now the reason of the delays, then the favourable winds, and then the protraction of the slave girls' wearying proclamations, until the patience of the Apostle was exhausted and the hour was to strike when the earthquake was to synchronise with the first night in prison, when the hymns were to be mingled with the hoarse roar of rocks beneath the prison foundations. "Doth God care for oxen ?" Yes ! a command was given on behalf of them when treading out the corn. But does not God care for Apostles as well as for oxen ? Yes ! undoubtedly, in a superior degree. But does not God care for jailors ? Yes ! undoubtedly, and to bring them and their households to the faith. God was ready to sub-

mit the Apostle to grievous persecution as the indispensable means of having the Gospel preached within prison walls. The earthquake was as indispensable as the Holy Spirit. And, without doubt, the imprisoned Titans, who slumber in waiting for the overturning of great cities, are chained for the time being. Until the day of the Lord dawns and the unshackled giant forces underground are bid arise, and in their turning will overturn, overturn and overturn, while hymns of praise will arise from the Remnant Church, for He whose right to reign, shall then confound His deriding adversaries, and establish the Kingdom which shall never be overthrown.

Paul and Silas, on leaving Philippi, were not accompanied by Luke and Timothy. Luke, the beloved physician, who tradition says was a native of Antioch, appears to have been frequently a voyager between Macedonia and Asia—perhaps was a ship doctor. At all events, by the change of the pronoun we perceive that he does not reappear until he comes into the company at Philippi, sailing in his accustomed waters.

Timotheus was early given in charge of the small company of believers gathered at Philippi. Paul's foresight deciding that the young man's vocation was genuine, and that his fitness for the pastoral office must be given the opportunity of increased efficiency through exercise.

So the maltreated Apostles pressed on. Amphipolis, an important and historical port, lay in their path, but they were not "free" (as the old Quakers aptly styled their spirit's impulses), they were not "free" to stop there after traversing thirty miles upon the Egnatian way, they, probably, merely slept one night and pressed on to Appolonia—a town somewhat

out of the direct way—and after another long day's travel, they merely rested their tired frames. The way was beautiful enough, the soil was rich, the plains, irrigated by streams and added to by skilfully constructed sluices. The *peasants*—the glorious peasants, slave or free, for ever fleeced and for ever unrewarded—made the earth smile up into the Apostles' faces. But they never stayed to admire natural beauty, or to calculate what a return might be expected from a proper cultivation of the soil. The cultivation of the sour soil of the human heart was *their* objective, and to sow these imperishable seeds of truth which had in the heart of them Eternal Life. This was the one consuming aim of the messengers of the Cross, and the souls about to be saved at Thessalonica urged them forward.

Yes ! Thessalonica was awaiting them, and glorious issues were impending. It is heart-rending to think of Salonica at present—the second city of the Turkish Empire—so unlike to Antique Rome, which cherished no deep seated resolve to withstand the advance of the Nazarene, but spread its shield of citizen privilege, irrespective of all diversity, from the ancestral worship.

Obedience to Law was the great gift of Rome to the presanctified age. And now, under Islam, after 1,300 years, Thessalonica saw the Lawless one appear, and in our day England aiding and abetting the Lawless one, the great curse of the world, the corruption of the best, being the worst. England, by her policy, has been guilty of the unnameable atrocities, murderings and plunderings of our pet ally, the Turk. We have placed the blister over and over again upon the shrinking virgin regions of possible peace and plenty, but England, vaunting of peace and purity and liberty,

has persisted in fastening the atrocious yoke upon the nascent populations, reverent of the Greek Church, determining that it shall not be removed. Armenia cries to Heaven for judgment against England. Bulgaria likewise. The Kurds, who are instigated by our Ally to illustrate lawlessness, and are permitted to descend from their hills to ravish, rob and kill the Christian cultivator, can defy censure from England because she has 60,000,000 Mohammedan subjects in her Empire. Is that our Christian Faith?

“Do we believe in God or not?” is the simple question to be asked of all us politicians. If they had but an inkling of what Christianity requires them to do, the Crescent would have long since disappeared from the political sky. It is no question of injuring the Moslem devotee, but of disarming him completely from supporting a Moslem Government in any spot of the habitable globe. Our complicity in the upholding of Turkey, when she was committing her Bulgarian atrocities, brought a hand writing upon the wall of her Empire—*Mene*. Again, when the Armenians cried to us in vain, the hand of avenging unrighteousness wrote on a second *Mene*. Then, when the treaty of San Stefano was not permitted to be carried out and Roumelia was divided in two—the Russian support to the budding Christian nationalities stayed, and huge portions of the Turkish dominions rescued by the Treaty from the Destroyer—it was England that threw them back into the pot, where Moslem fanaticism persisted in keeping the Christians stewing. Hers was the blood-red hand, trembling now for her Indian Empire, *Tekel*. Finally, when a revolution took place in Constantinople and the aim of the young Turks was to regenerate the Moslem Dominion and to rivet

Moslem chains upon the aspiring Cretans, thirsting to be united with Greece—England interfered (for she was the leading influence with the joint Christian powers) and compelled the Cretans to lower their new flag. Then came again the hand of the Avenger, pronouncing England's destiny—*Upharsin*. She has been weighed in the balances and persistently showed herself wanting. Her shameful and time-serving policy has been due to the lack of a real and not a sham Christianity. "Power belongs unto God." The Power delegated to England to use—her fleets and armies have been employed to uphold, instead of destroying the great curse of the world. She was made strong, in order that she might be the instrument of destroying the Turkish Empire. Instead of that, she has gone directly upon the path of faithless disobedience—her Statesmen have been demented, they have been busy, both Liberal and Tory, in weakening every defence of the Empire. Gladstone, though, indeed, an eloquent advocate for the deliverance of Christian nationalities from the Turkish yoke, yet was so infatuated as to gratuitously hand over the Ionian Islands to helpless Greece, when the natives were strongly averse to the transfer. This Statesman so utterly lacked sagacity as to surrender a most vital *coin d'avantage*, for the coming dissolution of the Moslem Empire. Here again was the madness of ignoring Biblical intimations and refusing to give any weight to Prophetic declarations. And yet the Bible ought to be the Statesman's Year Book—never out of his mind—the one reliable and triumphant Counsellor competent authoritatively to solve every knotty question, both home and foreign, Lord Salisbury was no less guilty of compromising England's future.

When the path was open for Africa to become the providential guardian of the destinies of all the black races, and England might have had almost the entire Continent, Lord Salisbury took upon himself, like a fairy godmother, to throw about immense Dominions, as if they were pieces of dead horse, to be snapped up by the growling powers who were supposed to become vegetarians and to smile back upon the Simpleton. Nothing more fatuous could have been entertained, still worse, accomplished. Lord Salisbury took the pains and trouble to create new frontiers to be defended against hostile powers. If we had the common sense and the Christian faith to recognise that the responsibilities conferred upon us by a Higher Power were intended to be thankfully accepted and courageously discharged, we should have had only the sea coasts to defend, and our sea power would be ample. But we actually made artificial difficulties by carving out territories as *bonnes bouches* for France, Portugal and Germany, and last folly of all, made a present to the last named of *Heligoland*. The Kaiser must have chuckled, as indeed he did. Then, having placed the knife at her own throat, England, looking out for a friendly ally, absolutely ran to the farthest East for comfort and consolation—as far as Japan! Was there ever such a combination of senility and national humiliation! What in the name of High Heaven did we require to go to Japan for? A pagan power—an upstart mushroom among the nations. That was the measure of our Fall, we could not go lower.

* * * * *

Paul, according to his custom, went to the Synagogues first of all and in three Sabbath days reasoned

from the Scriptures with the Jews, "opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead ; and that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ." The liberty given to one who was uttering unpalatable truths is very remarkable. Two things seem necessarily to be inferred, namely, that the liberty of prophesying to any visitor of Jewish extraction was not to be denied. The other is that a considerable number of the congregation were favourable to the new doctrine, that it was making way : or how was it that for three successive Sabbaths his prejudiced hearers had to put up with it ? Is it not time that a leaf should be taken from the Synagogue practice and permitted to be introduced into the established order of the Churches, free and national ?

It cannot be supposed that Paul was idle between the Sabbath days. He was always in the happy position of never questioning himself what he ought to do. He was given a high commission which covered every available moment in which his powers of body and mind could usefully operate. To kill time would be the act of a renegade and an Apostate.

Thessalonica was one of those busy centres of commerce where men of differing blood and rearing were drawn into bonds of intimacy by self-interest : a lower path and preparatory, for the close and enduring bonds of brotherhood which love and faith to a common Saviour were competent to forge. A few vivid glances and Paul saw that he was in the right place.

The intense pressure that exists to-day was never present in ancient Salonika. Steam and electricity have both given Time and poisoned it. There was in the Apostles' days vastly more uninvaded, unbalked

and unfrustrated time than we can secure. So the Apostles could enter into conversations with merchants, and with barterers in the Bazaars, and even with operators in the workroom. His enquiries for work would open to him most favourable opportunities. He was not out to remove his own poverty, merely, nor to abolish poverty generally among manual workers. Free labour was evidently not sweated in the degree in which we find it to-day, for the Apostle, in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians, iv. 11, exhorts his flock to "work with their own hands, as He had commanded," that they might "have lack of nothing" (v. 12). Manual labour as leading to "lacking nothing" suggests irony to-day, and evidently avenues of employment were more numerous. But these economical questions were not, in the Apostles' view, the nearest and the supremest interest for all men.

He was not called of God to preach an everlasting Gospel to intellectually gifted Animals, but to Sons of God and heirs of Christ's inheritance, if they would receive it. And, moreover, the Lord of Life and glory was at hand, attended by his saints and the ministers of his wrath and execution. The Apocalypse might be in their own day. The sleeping saints would hearken and awake to the trump of God, and together with those who were living and looking for it, would ascend to meet and greet the glorified Lord and His ransomed Hosts.

In view of prospects of such transcending import, sealed to them by their personal faith and hope, the material needs of the hour sank to the proper level and were adjusted to the real and the eternally supreme interests of immortal souls.

So Paul went happily about his great business.

He needed not to be pained and distracted by the question whether the groups he addressed were some of them starving and meditating suicide for want of employment.

The slaves he spoke to were at all events fed ; as beasts of burden, they had *that* charter. And when he preached to Masters, the lot of the slaves was ameliorated. To all classes Paul's preaching gave manumission at a stroke, for the master equally with his bondman was an abject slave to sin.

And what joy amid sufferings ! Thessalonica and Philippi were tasting the cup of life in a degree infinitely surpassing those wretched and debasing allurements—which are dangled before the disinherited dupes—who to-day are prepared to exchange their birth-right, nay even fling it away, for the lying promises of greater wages. All political improvement and economic advancement must go along with religious enlightenment. The true progress of any people is to be measured by the degrees of their advancing morality. The preachers of the Cross—to them it is given to lay the corner stone of every prosperous and hopeful commonwealth.

Happy Paul ! he was not going to encumber himself with a large " business " (in the Kingdom of God " Business " will disappear), nor would he require to satisfy the necessities of a dependent family. He purposely abstained from marriage, that he might, with least distraction, give himself to his high calling. Yet when his entire family was under his turban, and he was scarcely able to maintain himself by his manual labour, " Ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail, for labouring night and day because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we

preached unto you the gospel of God." (1 Thess. ii. 9).

Those were the revenues of a Bishop in those days, and he had an immense diocese and under him devoted Suffragans and fellow labourers looking to him for direction. But all the way he was richly rewarded. It is believed that the church at Thessalonica was the fruit of only three weeks! And yet, by his surprising success, the Apostle was provoked to exclaim: "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing! Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy" (1 Thess. ii. 19—20).

And to his suffering disciples he cheerily exhorted them "Rejoice evermore" (1 Thess. v. 16). Nevertheless, he begged their prayers—verse 25—not alone, because he could never feel self-sufficient, but because he wanted to have himself brought before their remembrance. No true Christians pray for themselves alone, and when all the several members of the church are continually praying for one another, then indeed will the common life be shared and no part of the entire body lack its blessing.

Other reasons for happiness did the joyful Apostle possess. He had blessed glad tidings to communicate to *all men*, but further he had miraculous powers vested in his own person, so much so that aprons and cloths laid against the Apostle's body became magical healers, when brought to the sick and applied to the suffering members. He was in a position to heal bodies and souls. Likewise he could confidently point to the believers—that the great and Blessed Hope of the Church, the return of the Lord, was certain, though not dateable. The event, its cir-

cumstances and its issues, were, in corroboration of the Lord's own declarations, communicated to the Apostle by special Revelation. No second-hand rumour—but first-hand information. Inspired by immediate successes, and having glorious prospects in the future—Paul, plying his monotonous tasks, lost sense of its drudgery, and would not escape from it, even if he could, so that he might add to the force of his exhortation, his own blessed and memorable example.

Fata Morgana! I can imagine some contemptuous reader exclaiming, 2,000 years have elapsed, and there has been no Second Advent. History has stripped the Founder of Christianity of his credentials.

In reply I rejoin, "Understand thou what thou readest?" Let us again "Search the Scriptures." "What was meant by the Kingdom of God, or of Heaven?" What was the office of the "Son of Man," and what the finishing of the work given Him to do? Answers to these enquiries will throw light upon the fulfilment of Second Advent predictions and expectations. What did Jesus mean by the Kingdom of God which He announced as *nigh*? We reply it was entirely a *Kingdom of the Holy Spirit*. No reference whatever to an earthly policy, secured by force and recommended by its solid utility, apart from ideal justice. By the "Kingdom of God," Jesus never contemplated Socialism in Excelsis. What He aimed to establish and extend was carnal man's subjection to the spiritual laws of the Eternal Life. The Kingdom of God he explicitly declared *within us*. So he said to the Scribe who professed his desire to be loyal to his God and to his neighbour, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God."

And of the young rich Ruler whose possessions disinclined him to fulfil the conditions the teacher imposed. "How hardly can they who have riches enter into the Kingdom of God." The love of riches or trust in riches, even apart from the suspicion that must attach to their acquisition, indisposes the soul to the pure joys of feeding from the hand of the Good Shepherd.

When, then, was the Kingdom of God to be expected? and had not that spiritual Kingdom been in existence ever since God whispered to man's soul?

To the latter enquiry we reply, undoubtedly! but it was too weak to conquer. It needed to come with power. The Jews were given to know more of it than the Gentile nations. All the Saints of the Old Testament and Simeon and Anna and Zacharias were moved to do and to speak as the Holy Ghost inspired. But more signal manifestations were yet required, because the great Act of Redemption waited for the crisis of its development. *Pentecost* was the foundation of the Kingdom of God, and Pentecost came just as Jesus predicted, during the generation to which He was speaking, and before the heralds of the Gospel had finished going over all the cities of Judea and Samaria. That was the Second Coming—nothing to do with the transfiguration, no prophecy or prefigurement of it at all. For there are several "comings."

The first was at Bethlehem, the second by the empty Sepulchre—and many during the forty days. But the "Second Coming" was the coming of the Holy Spirit with power and gifts of converting grace and power to raise the dead to life, spiritually and bodily—together with prophesyings and in "tongues."

From that period the Kingdom of God on earth was

established. It is still extending and will never be overthrown, for "the gifts of God are without repentance." The evidences of it are to be seen in the living temples which are strewn over the face of the world, and every Church or Chapel, school, hospital, or reformatory or prison is a materialised fragment of the Spiritual City of God. In them are propagated and manifested the subjection of carnal man to the spiritual laws of the Eternal Life.

The "Second Coming" Pentecost is easily identified with a return of the Lord, for the Holy Spirit came expressly to witness of Him, and to bring to recollection all that He did and said.

Quite another "Coming" is future, and then it will be in fulfilment of all the predictions concerning the "*Son of Man*."

The "*Son of Man*" is the Victim offered up for the transgressions of the guilty world, and whose acceptance or rejection of the saving work undertaken for it is the ground of the coming judgments and subsequent manifestation of a universal *Earthly Kingdom*.

John's "only begotten Son of God" is the same "Son of man," who is specially designated to the offices which He fulfilled, as sacrifice for sin, Confessor of the world's sin, vicariously, the Maker of the necessary atonement and the Mediator and Intercessor between God and man.

And most appropriately, He who was tempted as we are, was appointed to judge mankind. To judge the Church when it arises in the "first resurrection," and subsequently, after the Millennial reign, when the rest of the dead shall arise to be given their deserts.

Again the contemptuous reader derides allusion to Apocalyptic glories and terrors. But he may, per-

haps, concede that the destruction of Jerusalem and the *bouleversement* of the Jewish polity is history, and that it minutely fulfilled Christ's predictions forty years before. From the same mouth proceeded the foretellings of a period of distress among nations unparalleled and not to be repeated. Earth and sky conspiring to warn and admonish the careless and godless that their worship of their God of forces will desert them. And that supernatural forces, which they would never acknowledge, will find them out and judge them.

We have had quite enough of earthquakes, pestilences and famines, and a new plague is plaguing our own coasts. Wars and rumours of wars are common portents and the storings of thunder go on apace day by day. Labour dreams, and when it turns, it shakes thrones. The earth itself is restless to behold its Righteous Judge.

But we must resume. It is a principle of prophetic interpretation that there is generally more than one fulfilment. Our Lord's prediction concerning Jerusalem was meant to foreshadow the judgments that await the world at the close of the age. And that age is here and now. It is big with events, shortly to disclose its momentous dissolution and catastrophic termination. But for the elects' sake, the agonies of dissolution will be shortened. In the centre of the great storm cloud there are with the angels of the thunderbolt the angels of mercy. The faithful witnesses of the cursed Nazarene and His followers will survive the Cataclysm. Let the true Church be of good cheer! Every dread token of the Master's true word will testify to it of its speedy and glorious deliverance.

But the despisers would, even in their trepidation, dispute that anything could happen but what natural law made inevitable. The foolish believer in St. Luke's history would see in the shaking of the rushing wind and the lambent tongues, anticipations of Apocalyptic occurrences to be manifested on a stupendous scale, when the Lord will shake both earth and Heaven and gloriously manifest Himself to every eye. The eye of St. Paul perished under the blaze of His glory, but they who look for the return of the Son of Man will be exceedingly comforted. All the bad, dark afflictive past will have been gotten over. The "Judgment Day" for the saints will go on during slow pacing years, while their rewards, their chastenings and their perfecting, will form part of the Millennial glories.

Now to recur to our suggestion that the "Second Coming," so-called is Pentecost—it is obvious that under that view the nearness and certainty of the coming of the Son of Man to judgment is the more convincingly impressed upon us. Because we have two analogies and two fulfilments to refer to. The precise fulfilment of the first Advent prophecy alone is indeed abundantly sufficient to warrant expectation of the second Advent. But now, assuming the correctness of the hypothesis, the second Advent in Pentecost, repeating a literal fulfilment and adducable in the living present, necessarily greatly reinforces the reasonable expectation of a third literal fulfilment. The Lord's prayer has been long since answered, but falls short of its destined completion up to now. Nevertheless the Kingdom of God *has* come already and by the Holy Spirit is ever increasing its area. A totally new world and a new force entered the life of humanity

through the advent of the Holy Spirit in its Pentecostal diversity. Two strictly fulfilled prophecies have been vindicated. A third, in no ambiguous terms, knocks at the door of the present generation. These contemplations became familiar to the Apostle Paul, and his forecast of the ultimate fortunes of the Churches that he was planting, filled him with joyful anticipations. Well for him that the intermediate stages of the Churches trial were not disclosed. Asia Minor, blasted by Islam, holds only the ruins of St. Paul's cities.

Meantime we return to Thessalonica. Paul is happy, he has met unexpectedly Ephaphroditus, who was the bearer of a token of the love of the Church at Philippi — a truly poor and persecuted people, who, nevertheless, out of their necessities and their sufferings, made up a purse which gratefully met the personal necessities of their Father in Christ. This was the beginning of those frequent benevolences which years after St. Paul acknowledged in his Epistle from Rome. The same sentiments would undoubtedly animate him, upon the reception of the first grateful offering, and if Epaphroditus was indeed the bearer, to him he would pour out his yearning love for them, and exhort them. “Brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. Notwithstanding that ye have well done that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now, ye Philippians, know also, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no Church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. . . . But

I have all, and abound : I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice, acceptable, well pleasing to God." (Philippians iv. 1, 11, 14, 15, 16 and 18.) We are told that the work in Thessalonica, in the comparatively short time of three weeks, bore abundant fruit. "And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas, and of the devout Greeks, a great multitude, and of the chief women, not a few." (Acts xvii. 4.) Nothing but the indwelling power of the Spirit could produce such marvels. A poor tentmaker, a man quite hitherto unknown, and obliged to exercise a manual craft for his subsistence. Divine manifested power was the only explanation. It was that which "turned" the Thessalonians "to God from idols to serve the living and true God. And to wait for His Son from Heaven, Whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." (1 Thessalonians i. 9—10.)

But now what the mob of rioters said about "turning the world upside down," was being verified. Thessalonica was all in uproar. It was a manufactured riot. The idle, worthless, lewd and baser elements of the population were ready to believe anything, and to make disturbances against the preachers at so much per head. And they began to shout words that were put into hired mouths by fanatical paymasters. Jason was a converted proselyte, and having opened his house to the missionaries, the mob began to demonstrate before it, demanding that they should be given up to them. It was quite true that the world was, religiously speaking, needing to be turned upside down, but those brawlers had no real convic-

tions, they were the bought tools of the Jewish Tories, who resisted all innovations. Great forbearance and toleration is rightly to be accorded to those who, having been given an incalculable treasure, are suddenly challenged to part with it. Paul, of course, would reiterate that there was nothing *new* which was not implicitly imbedded in the *old*, and that the Prophets had predicted the development. All *that* would have been readily accepted if it came at the hands of a mighty and glorious conqueror, but to connect the Messiah with a crucified carpenter was too absurd ! Sin and a sin Bearer ! What had these to do with redemption from the Roman yoke ? Evidently there were Jews and Jews, and the persecutors were of the baser sort. " Another King—one Jesus." It was a taking accusation. The mob were taught it. Away with the absurd revolutionaries to the Roman Rulers ! But the tolerate Roman Dominion, expressed by its magistrates, being skilled in weighing the Jewish characteristics were not to be driven into overt acts of punishment. No doubt the tidings from Philippi had given the rulers a hint. So after bawling themselves hoarse, all that the mob could get from the magistrates was to bind Jason over and " the other " (who was that other ?) and then the accused were allowed to go. Thanks to the State ! which furthered the onward progress of the Gospel.

The " brethren "—new converts—showed the tenderest regard towards their teachers and consulted to despatch them safely under the escort of the night to Beraa.

What labours the Apostles underwent ! constantly. They were in the hands of the mob, and defending themselves before the magistrates for hours, and then,

after the anxious conclusion of the accusation, they had little or no rest, for their friends compelled them to undertake a journey of over forty miles the same night.

Darkness ! and they threaded the lanes, through long expanses of corn fields. Darkness still ! but then the distant splashing of tributaries of the Axius. Still darkness, while the wide flowing but shift and uncertain river made its threatening noise distinctly. Where is the ford ? Where is it safe ? These are matters we are not told of. But to cross the Axius in the dark must have been only one of the many perils of water with which Paul was already acquainted. When safely across, there remained the Haliacmon to traverse before reaching the city. The long plain between the two rivers was doubtless beginning to upbear the high shoulders of the Olympian range. Blushing to be suddenly discovered, red-eyed from keeping sleepless guard over the city, Beraa began to smile back to her mountain guardian.

Twinkling and tinkling streams ran together, then coyly separated at islands, and ran again into each other's arms, and shouted together at the rapids. It was a city of streams, upon which the sun showered gold and silver, but better than that was the " thousands of gold and silver " that the sacred books of the Jews contained—books which the Bœreans blessed and carried with them to their gardens ; and as they reclined beneath the ample shade of their plane trees—opened the pages, and searched diligently, if what the driven out preachers proclaimed was true or not.

On such a bright morning, doubtless many a pious Jew, gazing across the distant plain, where the

sea glistened on the far horizon—deemed it possible that, beyond what waters he saw, there might be measureless oceans of truth yet to explore—and find new Hesperides! The good Jew had been feeding upon the word—his blessed Psalms—and in the distance he saw a little caravan, the specks getting larger and larger, while the shadows were getting less. The company were toiling up the ascent, and passing through the gate, the pious Jew reader noticed two. The next day he recognised them at the Synagogue, and one of them was telling strange things.

The Jews of Beraa were of a nobler disposition than those of Thessalonica, for they readily received the message and day after day searched the Scriptures to see whether things were as Paul stated. As the result many of them became believers and so did not a few of the Greeks—gentlewomen of good position and character, and men.

But the happy position of things in Beraa was to be interrupted. The inveterate malice of the persecutors of Thessalonica would not allow them to rest. Neither private gain, nor the satisfaction of ridding their city of those disturbers would permit them to remain inactive. They heard that the insidious enemy had caught the ear of not a few at Beraa. Hence they at once started in pursuit, and now having become practised hands at a town tumult, they incited a mob again to riot. The “mob,” of course, deserving no more reproach, *in limine*, than that of being poor, and therefore ready to be hired to shout, merely, for the sake of a meal.

Thus was the Gospel spread by the efforts of its enemies to destroy it. The happy Bible readings

in the Synagogue were abruptly terminated. The "brethren" promptly sent Paul down to the sea coast, while Silas and Timothy remained behind. Those who were caring for Paul's safety went with him as far as Athens, and then left him, taking a message from him to Silas and Timothy, asking them to join him as speedily as possible. How strong and tender are the ties that are established between the bestower of soul-light and the yearning disciple who has had his darkness dissipated! The indebtedness on the part of the latter is life-long. An immediate opportunity having been given of making a grateful return, the new disciples persisted in going with Paul as far as Athens at all events. So in a few days another Church was planted. Doubtless Silas and Timothy engaged themselves in drawing up a simple table of requisites in doctrines, and equally simple directions for public worship. Ample liberty could be conferred, because the Holy Spirit supervised all.

But those dear "Brethren" *ignoti, innomata*, How much are we indebted to the Apostles' aid in their experimental evangelisation! Under every exigency "Brethren" spring up as from the ground *autochthonous*, asking to be of assistance. Gordon made a circuit of broken glass around Khartum. Sir Fowell Buxton strew grain for his partridges, with sinister designs for his gun. But for the strewers of Light. "Light is sown and joy for the upright in heart." The children of Light draw near. "Brethren," unknown before, persist in aiding, leaving business and family, and no historian preserves their names.

But when the writer of these lines, who has known something of succour in foreign parts, and under

untoward circumstances—when he has crossed the bar, he will look for a crowded pier—dear “Brethren” in the long succession of those who conducted St. Paul so often. Leaning upon their arms again, I shall know their names and as we ascend the bells will be pealing.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ST. PAUL AT ATHENS.

ST. PAUL stood on *terra firma* at the end of two long walls, at the port of classic Athens—Gentile city of the Gentiles.

He was immediately assailed by numerous vendors, whose booths were scarcely more numerous than the statues of the gods.

The Greek fishermen and salesmen were as equally witty and wily as those in the days of Xenarchus, or a costermonger of Cork. If the coster knew his fish to be stale, he was equal to the occasion. A fellow vendor, in the trick, would fall as by a sun-stroke on the pier. Then the coster would fill a pail from the sea, dash it upon the feigning fainter, and spill part of it designedly over his stale finnies. Then, while the stricken man is reviving, the fish vendor draws the attention of the crowd to see how fresh and blooming is the stock in his basket. "See," he says to St Paul, "Alive! Alive oh!"

Ah! but St. Paul knew that Paganism was stale—was really dead. He cast a sorrowful but yearning heart over those figured walls. It was no comedy in which Paul was to be merely a spectator. He had the water of Life, which could make dead souls bound with life and disport themselves in the ocean of God's love. How glad was he to be the bearer of such an embassy! Greece captive and aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel; he wanted to strike off her chains. And he knew by experience that it

could be done, and alone by the conquering Cross-Bearer.

Paul was dead to the marvellous achievements of the Pagan sculptors—their accurate anatomy—their deft translation of waving curls into immobile marble, their casual muscular contortions, and their heaving chests. The charm and wonder of it fell dead upon his eye, because there was another eye, within him, which reflected another image—the Man of Sorrows, Whose sorrows were for a sinning and despairing world. A hopeless world which saw only a sepulchre and derided a Resurrection. Therefore all things died within him, save the life purpose, which he resolved should rule him henceforth absolutely. “*One thing I do.* This will I adhere to, and let all else go.”

His eye fell upon an altar—“*To the Unknown God.*” To make Him known resolved was he. Then, turning to the dear “Brethren,” in bidding them Farewell, he bade them to urge Silas and Timothy to hasten their departure to join him, for he hoped that the field was white unto harvest.

He might be seen stopping, pausing, reading inscriptions while his heart was burning at the abounding idolatry. Yet he, I am assured, did not enter into a true conception of the ancient idolatry. It was the misconception of a born Jew who was unable to judge it fairly. His erroneous and exaggerated estimate of it was due to the abominations inseparable hitherto from a scandalous worship. If that could be purified, idolatry, in the want of Incarnate Deity, could do much to satisfy yearning but ignorant hearts. It was a highly useful convention in the want of the real thing. God manifest in a human

form. It supplied a basis for common fealty, avowed a sense of dependence, and the multitude honestly felt that there *were* superior beings, whose powers it was irreligious to deny and whose determinations, when running against their inclinations, recommended resignation, instead of useless raging. It encouraged patriotism and the mythologies gave fine scope to the poets, artists and entertainers, who together gave a bright border to the dull grey stuff which made up the daily round. It would be ridiculous to suppose that the cultivated Athenians were such children as to imagine that their beautiful statues were indwelt by divine potentialities. They did not. They worshipped the Spirit unknown to them, to which they had ventured to give embodiment, and since it was God's ordination, that they should know no better until the fulness of time came, there was no cause for raging and tragic condemnation, except as the natural light within was grossly contradicted. Happily, Paul when he began to speak gave utterance to the calm, charitable and philosophic view which marks his address in the Areopagus. The police of Athens, doubtless, some in disguise, were listening to the disputant, who was every now and then having a little crowd about him.

Amongst the illiterate there were others — Sophists, Philosophers, Rhetoricians, Barristers, Jurists and Demagogues. The earnestness of the speaker and his mental adroitness, also his incomprehensible but wonderful message, caused a crowd larger than usual. So the vain Athenian populace, getting all the hard work of the world done by slaves, were at liberty to devote, at first, an incurious attention ; but later, an absorbing interest to what the gesticulating Jew

was propounding. He seemed to be a setter forth of strange gods. Let us hear more about it. By this novel diversion they would be able to get through half a day.

See the crowd moving up to the Hill and the Parthenon on the left. The exquisite Temple of the Winds adjacent. Paul felt somewhat of a barbarian amid such architecture and culture. But there he was—to challenge it all, and denounce it as infantile, vacuous, and beneath the dignity of man. Moreover he had precious glad tidings to convey, and woe be to him if he ceased to discharge his trust, for a dispensation of the Gospel was committed to him. So he hailed the opportunity of addressing a goodly crowd of really curious and enquiring men. Fine leisurely days. No interruptions by the telephone, no rubbish committed for transmission to the wide world, acquainting it with the momentous facts, the names of the Cambridge boat that bumped, and the horse that lost within an inch of victory. No! we in the twentieth century are the children. Two thousand years ago we were men, and a crowd climbed a hill to hear something worth hearing.

But Paul's method was that of Socrates. He invited discussions. Upon every available opportunity he collared some intelligent listener, opened up questions of universal and perennial interest. And so pregnant were his words that the listeners readily became enchained. A few of the Epicureans and Stoics encountered him, and with hauteur the Rhetorician and Sophist scanned with contempt the mean garb which had been torn and mended after the scourging. So the scornful philosophers asked, "What has this beggarly babbler to say?" Others

said, "His business seems to be to cry up some foreign gods, because he had been telling the good news of Jesus and the Resurrection."

Then they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, asking him, "May we be told what this new teaching of yours is?" "For the things you are saying sound strange to us; we should like to be told exactly what they mean." For all the Athenians and their foreign visitors used to devote their whole leisure to telling or hearing something new. So Paul, taking his stand in the centre of the Areopagus, spoke as follows:—

"Men of Athens! I perceive that you are in every respect remarkably religious. For as I passed along and observed the things you worship, I found also an altar bearing the inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' The Being, therefore, whom you, without knowing Him, revere, Him I now proclaim to you, God Who made the universe and everything in it. He, being the Lord of Heaven and Earth, does not dwell in sanctuaries built by men; nor is He ministered to by human hands, as though He needed anything, but He, Himself, gave to all men life and breath and all things. He caused to spring from one forefather people of every race, for them to live in the whole surface of the earth, and marked out for them an appointed span of life and the boundaries of their homes: that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might grope after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us. For in Him we live and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring.'" Forasmuch then we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the

Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. These times of ignorance God viewed with indulgence ; but now He commands all men everywhere to repent, seeing that He has appointed a day on which, before long, He will judge the world in righteousness, through a Man Whom He has predestined to this work, and has given assurance to everyone by raising Him from the dead." (Weymouth and A.V. Acts xvii. 22—31)

"When they heard Paul speak of a resurrection of dead men, some began to scoff ; but others said, "We will hear you again on that subject." So Paul went away from them. A few, however, attached themselves to him and believed ; among them being Dionysius (a member of the Council), a gentlewoman named Damaris, and some others."

It is at first sight astonishing and incomprehensible that a message so magnificent in its substance should be treated with such negligent repudiation. There were minds of great capacity, subtle, highly trained, and stored with the profound speculations achieved in physics and metaphysics. They were the instructors of the world and were originators and exemplars of statecraft as well as reached unsurpassed excellence in all the arts of antiquity. The debt of the Romans to them and through them to the modern world is quite incalculable. And yet this wonderful people, second only to the Jews, were ready to regard this life simply as a cup of wine, to be spilt upon the ground.

They believed in the Immortal Gods, but aspired not to claim fellowship with those whose flame could not be blown out by a passing wind. They preferred, too, to mourn departed friends, believing

it to be certain that they would never see them again. What is the solution of the enigma? Proselytes and slaves were not slow to rejoice in continued existence, even Grecian proselytes elsewhere. But at Athens, the University of the world, where the highest culture was to be found, a future life seemed to be accounted of no real value—"not a thing to be grasped at," but to be let fall, as a careless hand lets fall a stone!

The explanation I conceive to be is that the message was coupled with something which more than counter-balanced its attractiveness. The Man who gave assurance of a *Life to come* gave also of a *Judgment* to come. *Judgment after this life*, damnified all the grand boons that accompanied the rest. Hapless Athenians! In their secret hearts life was precious, but every life was morally evil—and Judgment upon that evil! "Let us hear no more about it. We will hear from you again"—not now, and then, *sotto voce*, "He has given us an uneasy hour." Yet Paul had much more to tell them. He was only at the beginning. He had yet to speak of how sin could be put away, and the avenging sword sheathed in the riven side of God's redeeming Son. If allowed to go on, instead of hearing but half the story, he might have had a swarm of the Areopagites exclaiming with one voice, "Go on! Go on! Thou messenger from the gods, Thy wine is good, it is slaking our thirst. It is strengthening and consoling our souls. It is giving us glimpses of what we often dreamt of and hoped still might be true."

○ So sin spoiled all the opportunity—man's persistent enemy. No Church was made at Athens, at all events nothing is recorded.

Restless so long as he was reaping no harvest, and not having the consolation of Silas and Timothy, the small company—bright eyed, spiritually exalted—new born, would bid an affectionate “God-speed!” to Paul as he sped to *Corinth*. To *Corinth* the finger of God distinctly pointed.

Corinth was in the providential scheme—one of those great commercial cities, having two Ports, one West and another East, between which small craft sometimes were transported on land. Here was a fine gathering of cosmopolitans—a fine posse of active, eager, alert merchants. Men of open mind, liberal views, and statesmanlike capacity. Commerce on the largest scale is the best road to political sagacity, and the best administration, maugre the commerce not being unusually corrupt.

But Corinth had become corrupt by its wealth, and self-indulgence, covered up or stimulated by the pretences of pagan piety, led to Corinth being pointed to as an example of all that was not reputable. Nevertheless what the Athenians refused on account of its hint of a judgment to come—the Corinthians, though, at first doubting concerning a Resurrection, and for the same reason as the Athenians, they afterwards more readily received.

First of all, however, consistently with his invariable practice, Paul went to the Synagogues. “Here he found a Jew, a native of Pontus, of the name of Aquila. He and his wife Priscilla had recently come from Italy because of Claudius’ edict, expelling all the Jews from Rome, so Paul paid them a visit,” and because he was of the same trade—that of tent-maker—he lodged with them, and worked with them. But Sabbath after Sabbath he preached

in the Synagogue and tried to win over both Jews and Gentiles (Weymouth).

It does not appear that Aquila and Priscilla had heard before of the Evangel. It was the identity with Paul's handicraft that led to the lodging with the banished Roman Jews. But we may reckon with certainty that the first thing that Paul did was to open up a discussion on the Messianic predictions and their fulfilment.

We can imagine how the work sped in the common workshop. In the weaving processes, after a fair start, with no complexity in the pattern, the mind is not hindered, it is rather assisted by a manual process which can go on almost by itself. The manual occupation helps to fix attention without fatiguing it. It may even stimulate. All this, however, is in complete contrast with modern weaving in the factory under the drive of the steam engine, where a weaver, minding four looms, is spent and exhausted by the tense nervous strain, and the tireless speed of the machinery. The improvements in production are invariably hostile to labour. The former days were better than these. They permitted an Apostle to suspend his occupation without damage and to engage in a discussion with fellow workmen, or resume it without quitting the topic, not to mention that there was no danger of the operator having his arm wrenched off as Michael Davitt had his when a child.

It was good for Paul properly to enter the same school wherein our Lord Jesus was reared, the School to which all the Societies that ever existed are indebted and without which neither Governments nor homes can be maintained—the School of Labour—slave labour, wage labour, the latter often severer than

the former. It was eminently fitting, nay, necessary, that Paul should join those honourable ranks and share in its tragedy and its glory. So Paul found himself in high-born society, fellow heirs with him of the Abrahamic covenant, and with them meaning to realise the extension of the Abrahamic covenant to the Gentiles. The clacking of the loom, if such there were, was suspended for a season, and then raising his head, Paul would enter upon discussions, from his abundant stores of the Prophets and Rabbinical traditions, throwing light upon what was obscure, and applying it forcibly to his associates, inducing them to fall in with his conclusion, and pursuing the profitable themes until the midday repast and the siesta.

That midday repast could not be strictly identified with either a love feast or the Sacramental Supper. This last, and the common meal were alike, essentially Church ordinances, but any and every ordinary meal is sanctified by the remembrance of the broken Body and the shed Blood, and ought to be so profitably used. In no long time Aquila and Priscilla became first members of the Church at Corinth and the "Last Supper" was instituted as a minister of grace and the bond of the saved family. When spiritually observed, there was ever with them the adorable Head and Lord, the remembrance of Whom could never fade and Whose return was the Church's Hope. But no sentimental dreamer was Paul, wasting time in the indulgence of unnecessary sleep and religious musings. Soon, refreshed by his short siesta, he would jump up to think of other weaving, the tabernacling of Pilgrims through time and eternity, with the stars of hope gleaming through. Yes ! it was the day and the time.

A young proselyte, who was being befogged by Philo and wanted an explanation. Paul threads the now crowded streets and, hasting to the rendezvous, the statue of Hercules with his club, he finds the punctual youth, with a brightened countenance, eagerly entering upon his enquiries. Another thread was shot into the wedding garment. The new Hercules was slaying the world's hydra. Oh ! great tent-maker ! thy weaving has gone ever since.

Happy day ! but there was more happiness in store. For as they two wended their way onwards, suddenly Paul stopped and he actually laughed. The grave and earnest Apostle seldom went further than to smile, as when he saw children at play. But on this occasion he laughed aloud, for now he ran right against Silas and Timothy, whose absence he had desiderated so much. They had come suddenly and brought happier news of Thessalonica and the other seed plots, so that Paul's cup of joy was full. The convert was introduced at once, and all were chatting together. Paul hurrying them all to his home with Aquila and Priscilla ; when that night there was such a meeting that the Recording Angel blotted out his pages by his tears.

“ Now at this time when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was preaching fervently, and was solemnly telling the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. But upon their opposing him with abusive language, he shook his raiment by way of protest and said to them. ‘ Your blood be upon your own heads, I am clean, from henceforth I will go among the Gentiles.’ So he left the place and entered into a certain man's house, named Titius Justus, who was a worshipper of the true God. His house was next door to the Syna-

gogue. And Crispus, the warden of the Synagogue, believed in the Lord and so did all his household : and from time to time many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and received baptism. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision. ‘ Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace, for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee : for I have much people in this city.’ And he continued there a year and six months, teaching among them the message of God.” (Weymouth and A.V. Acts xviii. 5—11.)

How much is contained in the few lines which tell us of the prolonged stay at Corinth ! To have a just appreciation of the life that Paul led, we must correct notions that may hastily have been formed in a cursory reading of the Acts. It was no agitated zig-zag—the flights of a wayward and inscrutable bird. It had long suspensions of Itineracy, long periods likewise of quiet but laborious occupation, during which gestation went on, the bringing to the birth of those sublime revelations, which upon occasions were put forth for hope and consolation ; as also with the sanctions of Divine authority for the regulation of disorders and the suppression of heresy. Eighteen months ! a long, sweet nourishing, monotonous rest. Sabbath after Sabbath in the Synagogue, if he was allowed to speak he ever tried to win over both Jews and Greeks. After the first day that the table of the Lord was spread and partaken of, tables had to be added to, or larger rooms hired, or several meetings in various places. That Corinthian Church, by reason of its many attacks of spiritual disease, furnished the Apostle with almost every example, either to imitate or avoid. Hence those most fruitful eighteen months,

for a founder and overseer of other churches. It was at Corinth that the two Epistles to the Thessalonians were indited.

The circumstances of the Corinthian Church, then and after, brought into existence those precious, detailed and comprehensive tables of regulations for church life, which are found enduringly applicable to all gatherings of the Lord's people. The celebration of the Lord's Supper. The regulations for public worship and the control of the spirit—filled speakers. The Apostles' verdict upon the comparative importance of the varied powers conferred by Apostolic hands upon the baptized, from that fount of power, the Pentecostal Spirit. The magnificent prophecy and argument of the Resurrection of the Dead and the future life of the whole universe, over which the Angel of the Resurrection is to-day applying his lips for the last trump. The exquisite interlude, the Hymn to Charity, and the spurning indignation to which he was stirred in his second Epistle, when his Apostleship was challenged, and he entered upon vindications which he began with particularity and then dropped in disgust, as totally unbecoming and against his nature. These are but a few of the notable features of the letters to the Corinthians and place them among the most precious portions of Holy Writ.

It has been supposed that more than one Epistle has been lost—some contend for three as missing. If that should be true, it is most certain that nothing has perished, which the Church really required. The particular and general providence over all events forbid the supposition that the Christian Church lies under any disadvantage. Indeed a valuable argument against basing doctrine solely upon the letter

of scripture might be advanced in favour of the superior testimony of the Holy Spirit, whose abiding life can never be lost to the Church. There are doctrinal controversialists who put single texts against a whole array of other texts to the contrary. Very dangerous ground when one or two lost Epistles should turn up and (if witnesses to the letter were to decide it) speak against the point hitherto tenaciously held.

The Christian Faith never depended upon the letter of the Scriptures *alone*. It depends upon the Spirit of all Truth, which is the Spirit of Christ. When the testimony of the Word appears to be in conflict with the testimony of the Spirit ; the witness of the Spirit is undoubtedly superior and the letter is to be disregarded.

The Truth of the Great Salvation never depends upon the number or authority of ancient documents, their exemption from risk or mistake or want of scholarship. All such surmises are really ridiculous when the destinies of mankind are in question. We do not depend upon the findings of spectacled Professors to establish or deny the Immortal Foundations of the Christian Faith which are laid by the Spirit of God within the soul and are immovable as the decrees of God Himself to save the world, through the revelation of His Son. Albeit, we have both the impugnable letter, and the testifying Spirit, in such abundance, that no vital article of the Christian Creeds can ever be overthrown for Truth Thirsters.

A year and six months at Corinth. Paul had an opportunity of acquainting himself with Grecian life. Some aspects of it must have kept up his broadening bias towards Gentile civilisation. At

all events, apart from the peculiar joy which is perennial to the possessors of the Christian Faith, there was at Corinth more glad free life than in London, or in England in A.D. 52 than in 1910 here. Everything, indeed, was on a smaller scale. When one looks into the days of antiquity, it is like watching the doings of a hive of bees, or exploring the mounds of a colony of ants. The Greek City, and the Greek State, and the Greek Colony was so ridiculously small, and yet upon that minute scale eternal principles of the government of men in society were established, and play was given to the intellectual faculties in discovering, or attempting, the reconciliation of law with liberty, with the ironical accompaniment of enslaving the nurses and fathers of the entire commonwealth. What large minds were there in that small State—essaying to make the circuit of all possible knowledge, and fearlessly plunging into the dark recesses behind the white and matchless marble, which pleased the multitude, but left the deepest thinkers perplexed and unsatisfied as to the invisible gods.

Apart from these gigantic efforts, the only things in ancient days of any magnitude were the crimes. Sometimes these were really on a grand scale. The virtues were on a petty scale and the highest did not appear at all.

But "Christian" civilisation could rival the crimes, perhaps exceed them. Those who in 1910 go down to the mines and who go down to the sea in over-insured ships have an odd chance of life. And the magnificent progress of the mechanical arts is attended by starving men and wailing women whose triumphs in invention mean the perpetual

defeat of employment. Similarly the protean march of chemistry applied to fabrics and condiments lowers the longevity of the industrials, and lengthens the list of the trades with which the Life's Insurance Companies will have nothing to do.

Paul, when he went and came from his work, was not stunned by the bawling of the advertisements from the insistent hoardings, with their pestilent impudence, and their tyrannical intrusion upon the senses of the spectator and his chosen themes of contemplation. The brutal trader, worse than a footpad, would rob the passer by of every moment of his time, and if, lifting his eyes from the streets for relief, wanting to breathe for an instant among the stars, these pigmies of humanity returning to apehood, clamber upon the roofs and above the chimneys, blotting out the still silent constellations, with their flares of puffed cocoas, smokes and sweets, everything to minister to the merely bodily sensations in the most trifling manner. How the world has advanced since Socrates talked up to now, when the Penny Dreadful absorbs the mind of the loitering schoolboy!

In ancient Greece Paul was among men. He entered his workshop, dignified by the scene of duty and utility, adding to his yards of tent cloth, and by his active intellect, weaving those immortal disquisitions, which the manual occupation even helped, with little to distract him from the successful prosecution of his great Apostolic mission.

It was not before that he had resolved to devote himself principally to the Gentiles that Paul had made notable progress among the Jews. Crispus, "the Warden," or (A.V.) Chief Ruler of the Synagogue,

believed in the Lord, and so did all his household. This and the continued progress made among the Corinthians stirred up the Jews to jealousy and bitterest animosity. "And when Gallio became Pro-Consul of Greece, the Jews with one accord made a dead set at Paul, and brought him before the Court. This man, they said, is inducing people to offer unlawful worship to God. But when Paul was about to begin his defence, Gallio said to the Jews: 'If it had been some wrongful act or piece of cunning knavery, I might reasonably have listened to you Jews, but since these are questions about words and names and your law, you, yourselves, must see to them: I refuse to be a judge in such matters'" (Weymouth, Acts xvii. 12—16). So he drove them from the judgment seat. Then the Greeks all set upon Sosthenes, the Warden of the Synagogue, and kept beating him severely in front of the Court, but Gallio did not concern himself in the least about this. The populace, eager to ascertain the sentiments of the new Deputy, took instantly the cue given them by the pronounced indifference of Gallio, and gladly availed themselves of the license, tacitly permitted them to indulge their feelings against the hated race—mostly money lenders—so they were snubbed. Another case of the State furthering the extension of the Church. And Paul after this, tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the Brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila, having shorn his head in Cenchrea, for he had a vow. Strange subservience on Paul's part to either a vow or its quittance—a bit of egg shell!

"And he came to *Ephesus* and left them there." But always his true self, when the Apostolic mission

was before him. He at once entered the Synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. And when they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not, but bade them farewell, saying, "I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will." And he sailed from Ephesus. He could the more readily feel assured that he was right in not staying now, because he felt, with his usual prescience, that he had important witness to bear at a future time in the great heathen city. So landing at Cæsarea he went up to Jerusalem and inquired after the welfare of the Church, and then went down to Antioch.

Paul seemed never at home in Jerusalem since the great severance from his former associates and his older faith. The part, too, he played in persecuting the Church had effectually poisoned all his reminiscences of the Jewish metropolis. Even to the Christian and to the Apostolic band who presumed to dictate all the measures relating to the new constitution of the faithful converts—Paul felt that he was in some sort an interloper, setting up an authority which they at Jerusalem would like to disavow if they might: and the greater the success among the Gentiles, the less he was favoured. That impetuous man disturbed every cushioned seat. He was come again to lecture us, even Peter and James.

Yes! Paul was better away. He had done with keeping feasts, excepting the Supper of the Lord. Dear old Antioch! It is years since he saw it. How intensely he had longed to know how that mother Church was doing! Clearly there was no cause for discouragements at Jerusalem. No lamentable divisions or heresies had sprung up to poison the peace of

the fellowship. Nero had slipped into the throne, through his mother's crime, but the foul politics of Rome were not then affecting the Jews. Paul began to feel the yearnings of a foster father; and the Churches he had planted had become so much a part of himself that he could no longer postpone a further visitation. He was resolved upon an Archdiaconal progress through the whole of Galatia and Phrygia in order, and strengthening all the disciples.

He rapidly returned to Antioch, but made no long stay. The writer of the Acts signifies merely "some time." Evidently, the Church there was in a satisfactory condition. On to new conquests! He toured quickly through the upper coasts and came to the important centre of Ephesus again, as he had promised. Here he was destined to stay for two years—a longer period than at Corinth, and from thence he wrote his two Epistles to the Corinthians. No doubt Paul was again domiciled with Aquila and Priscilla; for when they accompanied him from Corinth on his previous visit, he left them there, with other of his companions. He wrought again at his old trade, with those beloved artizans, his "helpers in Christ Jesus"; "Who have for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the Churches of the Gentiles." (Romans xvi. 3—4.) And who, when they left a warm circle of friends at Corinth, sent hearty Christian love to them, in Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. Aquila and Priscilla also accommodated "the Church which meets at their house." All the brethren sent greeting to Corinth. "Greet one another with a holy kiss."

"A Jew, named Apollos, came to join the Christians. He was a native of Alexandria, a man of great learn-

ing and well versed in the Scriptures. He had been instructed by word of mouth in the way of the Lord, and being full of burning zeal he used to speak and teach accurately the facts about Jesus, though he knew of no baptism but John's.

"He began to speak boldly in the Synagogue, and Priscilla and Aquila, after hearing him, took him home and explained God's way to him yet more accurately. Then, as he had made up his mind to cross over into Greece, the brethren wrote to the disciples at Corinth, begging them to give him a kindly welcome, Upon his arrival he rendered valuable help to those who through grace had believed, for he had powerfully, and in public, overcome the Jews in arguments, proving to them from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ." (Weymouth xviii. 24—28.)

Apollos had gone to Corinth, having been more fully informed, and Ephesus was again to be the place where only partially enlightened disciples were to have their Christian endowments completed. Paul had been touring through the inland districts and came again to Ephesus, where he found a few disciples.

"Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you first believed?" he asked them. They answered, "No! we did not even hear that there is a Holy Spirit."

"Into what, then, were you baptized?" he asked.

"Into John's baptism," they replied.

"John," he said, "administered a baptism of repentance, bidding the people believe in One who was to come after him, namely, on Jesus."

"On hearing this they received baptism into the Name of the Lord Jesus: and when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began to speak in tongues and to prophesy.

They numbered in all about twelve men." Now this is a passage which the Evangelists of modern days must find it hard to tally with his preconceptions. Here were twelve men on the road to salvation, although they had not even heard of Jesus Christ, but only of John's preaching as the Forerunner, and they were baptized by John into the hope that was set before Him. It would appear that shortly after John had baptized them, that they were obliged to leave Palestine and to go into Asia Minor, maintaining their pious faith that the Messiah was about to come, and in spirit preserving their true repentance.

The Holy Spirit, which in a different and subordinate manner, shorn of His proper attributes, had been in the world of men from the beginning, was now to burst forth like the sun, up to that moment enveloped in clouds, then at Pentecost showed Himself, not only an enlightener as to Spiritual truth and a Sanctifier, but also chose to confer additional gifts, not before known to the world, strictly in connection with the acceptance of the doctrine of Christ as preached by the Apostles, and imparted through the laying upon the head of the baptised converts, the hands of the Apostles.

All this is now, special and peculiar to the primitive Church during the lifetime of the Apostles. These twelve men were providentially debarred from coming to an earlier knowledge of the Truth as it is in Jesus. And equally true is it that their ultimate and complete enlightenment was not accomplished without the agency of Apostolic baptism and Apostolic hands. "They received baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus : and when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began to speak

on tongues and to prophesy " (Acts xix. 5—7, Weymouth).

Several questions come to be asked. These twelve men were providentially interdicted from fuller knowledge *pro. tem.* and then fully privileged later. These twelve were obviously in exactly the same position that nations of millions of men which had never been allowed to know anything of Jesus Christ during the ante-Christian period and subsequently. They were reserved for fuller knowledge later, and if that knowledge could not reach them during their mortal lives, it must be concluded that it will reach them in another life, in the world to come.

Again. What about those precious gifts unbought, not to be purchased either by costly sacrifice, penances or prayers, but simply conferred by grace and electing favour. Why was not the privilege of conferring them retained *after* the period of the living Apostles? Why has the Christian Church not had conferred upon it successors of the Apostles, endowed with similar supernatural powers, causing great joy and able to communicate such real blessings? The answers may be various.

It may at once be asserted that the grace and power has *not* ceased, but has been handed down to the legitimate successors of the Apostles. An answer that History has not verified, although cases are recorded of miracles analogous to such as Paul wrought, and some deem that they cannot be denied.

Another question: If for a period, during which great corruptions entered into the Church, and that these precious boons in consequence were withdrawn—Why may we not hope for their *introduction*? When the Church, having repented, may look for a gracious

visitation of the Divine favour, enriching it by the former powers ?

Leaving these enquiries unsolved, we can discern a reason for the abnormal use of miracle through St. Paul when at Ephesus. We are told that " God brought about extraordinary miracles through Paul's instrumentality. Towels or aprons, for example, which Paul had handled, used to be carried to the sick, and they recovered from their ailments, or the evil spirits left them " (Acts xix. 11—12, Weymouth).

Now Ephesus was a seat of all manner of devilish magic and enchantment. Those who deny the reality of evil agents and their permitted powers to afflict humanity, have to explain to what they would refer the general predisposition of the average man to his own subjection to evil thoughts and tendencies. Are they to be referred to God ? Then, if not to God, to whom ? And if to an evil personality, are his powers limited to suggesting evil thoughts ? Can he not do more than that ? Can he and does he not impose upon the spectators, and appear able to demonstrate equal powers to those miracles which the Apostles were enabled to perform ?

Ephesus contained many students of the Black Art and Exorcists, *e.g.* : " Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew of high priestly family were exercising their powers and undertook to invoke the name of Jesus over those who had the evil spirit, saying, ' I command you by that Jesus whom Paul preaches,' when the evil spirit answered them, ' Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye ? ' And the man in whom the evil spirit was, sprang on two of them, overmastered them both, and treated them with

such violence that they fled from the house, stripped of their clothes, and wounded. All the people of Ephesus, Jews as well as Greeks, came to know of this. There was widespread terror and they began to hold the name of the Lord Jesus in high honour" (Acts xix. 14—17, Weymouth).

"Many also of those who believed came confessing without reserve what their conduct had been, and not a few of those who had practised magical arts brought their books together and burnt them in the presence of all. The total value was reckoned up and found to be 50,000 silver coins. Thus mightily did the Lord's message spread and triumph" (Acts xix. 18—20, Weymouth).

Now as we have said, there was a special reason why extraordinary miracles were granted to be performed by Paul. The "economy of miracle" is a principle regulating the ordinary operations of the Holy Spirit, but when the seat of Satan is withstanding the preaching of the Christ—then is the occasion for abnormal manifestations of superior beneficent miracle. Nowhere but at Ephesus, probably, were such miracles being done. Satan's seat needed to be attacked and overthrown. Those who throve by the aid of the Devil, using the Devil's arts, came confessing without reserve what their conduct had been. Their repentance was sincere, as evidenced by the enormous sacrifices that they voluntarily made, and Paul, Paul alone, wrought the marvellous change. He was mighty in word and deed.

Now I doubt not that most of my readers will have long since discarded the old-fashioned faith in evil personalities and their permitted dominion over men and women. Sin is being rubbed out, as

only a mistake, not a crime, and the hateful deed is not to be attributed to subjection to an evil personality, but to psychological concurrences which, void of moral blame, have scientifically worked out issues and have been mistakenly thought of as transgressions against God's Holy Law.

The practisers of the Black Art, then, might have kept their 50,000 pieces of silver, and also their peace of mind and the honour and esteem of their fellow citizens. Strange to say, however, there were persons reputed to be possessed by evil spirits, who avowed their faith in Jesus and Paul. "But who are ye?" and one possessed sprang upon two of them and overmastered them and left them naked and wounded. That was rather a striking confutation of such vain philosophers. The striking abjuration, and the no less striking testimonies, by Terror, and by Laud and Honour to the name of the Lord Jesus.

We must now go back to refer especially to the great missionary centre that Ephesus began to become. Paul had paid his due to his fellow countrymen, as usual, but his fearless preaching became so convincing that a party was formed to oppose him bitterly. The malignants cultivated their powers of speech and the reverent worship of God was being disturbed by acrimonious debates. For three months these miserable dissensions went on, when Paul wisely and voluntarily withdrew himself, taking with him several disciples: and there in 'Tyrannus' Lecture Hall the congregation of the new faith assembled daily for discussions, and on the first day, doubtless, for the Lord's Supper.

Now there was quiet in the Synagogue, and quiet

in the Secular Hall. A fruitful period, during which for two years "all the inhabitants of the Province of Asia, Jews as well as Greeks, heard the Lord's Message." (Weymouth, Acts xix. 10.)

The leaven was leavening. Silver shrines for Diana were getting cheaper, and forced sales meant loss.

"Why are you not employed?"

"No work," replied the craftsman.

"Sacrifice to Diana!" said the other.

"No, indeed! Diana is getting stale. She attracts no longer, and we shall all be ruined!"

"Explain yourself!"

"It is all along of the Tyrannus' Hall, I believe, and the discussions led by that fellow Paul. He is at it almost daily, whenever he can leave his loom. And he is also touring about for days together. Sometimes he gets beaten soundly, by Jews, Gentiles and robbers, but he bears a charmed life, and he is right again, strong and vigorous.

"But what is the matter with your arm?"

"Oh! I was cutting sacrifices for Diana and the edge of my cleaver must have got poisoned, for a scratch it gave me has festered and ran up my arm."

"Stop you! I can cure you," and he shouted to a girl, who was weaving garlands for the Olympiad. "Have you any of Paul's cloths?"

"Yes," she replied. "One has cured my grandmother, you can try it if you like." She presently brought it. "Here you are," said the first, "wrap this round and pray to Jesus, whom Paul preaches, and your arm will be well to-morrow morning."

"There is no gainsaying what Paul preaches," said the other, "but meantime I shall be starving, the Guild is getting poorer."

Next day the idol butcher came rejoicing that his arm was quite well. But there was a tremendous uproar. The morning broke quietly and the pretty tinkling of the hammering upon the silver shrines pleasantly joined with the happy droning of the bees that were always diving into Diana's flowers. But Demetrius had been turning over his books. Last year his returns were less, and this year, if things do not alter, he will have to face his creditors. It really grieved him, too, to dismiss a large number of his hands; for he was a real good sort, who had purchased his freedom by unremitting shrine making, and then worked himself to become a comparatively large employer of labour. And when the grain ships from Alexandria were wrecked and the knavish corn merchants drove up prices to a famine level, Demetrius got up a public demonstration and so frightened the corn corner-men that prices were dropped to a more reasonable figure.

His demonstration had succeeded and now he was ready for another. So he called together the workmen of like occupation, and said, "Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth, and you see and hear that not at Ephesus only, but throughout almost the whole province of Asia, this fellow Paul has led away a vast number of people by inducing them to believe that they are not gods at all that are made of man's hands. There is danger, therefore, not only that this our trade will become of no account, but also that the temple of the great goddess, Diana, will fall into utter disrepute and, that before long she will be actually deposed from her majestic rank—she who is now worshipped by the whole province of Asia, nay by the whole world." (Acts xix, 25—27. Weymouth.)

And when they heard these sayings they were full of wrath and cried out, saying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." The shouts went up into the Empyrean. What did it mean? Men and women rushed into the square, booths were left and sly cats and dogs were having a fine meal. Another volley of cheers. Demetrius was still upon his legs. They wanted to hoist him.

"But no!" said he. "This is no child's play. The matter is serious. The prosperity of this great city, its festivals, its worshippers, its pilgrimages, depends upon Diana. Let Diana be decried and we sink among the cities of Asia. Our ships, our colonies and our commerce are all implicated, we must make the authorities close these discussions in Tyrannus' Lecture Hall—that is the seat of mischief, my friends. These infidel discussions are angering the gods and our prosperity is waning day by day. It is that fellow Paul."

"No!" interjected the cleaver. "Paul is all right. It is them Jew fellows," and he raised up his healed arm, and muttered "*Sixty per cent.*"

And a granny shrieked out with a cracked voice, "Paul is all right, it is they Jew fellows."

"Three cheers for Paul," said one. And here and there a few timid friends of the Apostle showed themselves.

Demetrius dexterously stopped dissensions, and moved that "we go to the theatre and draw up our grievances to present to the authorities."

General cheering, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled with confusion: and, having caught Gaius and Aristarchus—men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel—they rushed with

one accord into the theatre. And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. And certain of the chiefs of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not venture himself into the theatre." (Acts xix. 29—31, A.V.)

The theatre was jammed up, and through the circular hole in the ceiling, and through the windows, the shouting ascended like a steam and spread among all the noises of the running crowds.

"Can't get in," most said. "Let's go to the Lecture Hall, which Demetrius said was the seat of mischief. Come along!"

To Tyrannus' Hall they sped. It was barred and bolted. And they were beating in the door when one said, "You are slim, get up and try a window." The slim youth got up to the ledge, forced the lattice, and the crowd heard him drop upon the floor.

"What have you seen?" cried the crowd.

"Nothing but a few rugs and hassocks," said the youth.

"Did you not see the Black one?"

"No! No image—nothing."

"You are mistaken, young man. Everybody knows that Paul worships the Black One. Look again!"

"Here's something," cried the voice from within, and he shied a scroll through the lattice. A hundred hands were reaching for it, but it fell to a slave, who could not read it.

"What is it?"

"Oh! It is not Greek or Latin. It's that cursed Jews lingo."

A score of heads were bent over it, while the crowd cried, "Read it! Read it!"

The reader unrolled it and read : "Unto Thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. Oh ! my God, I trust in Thee. Let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me. Show me Thy ways, O Lord ! teach me Thy paths, Lead me in Thy truth and teach me : for Thou art the God of my salvation. On Thee do I wait all the day " (Psalms xxv. 1—2, 4—5).

"Skip and go on," said the crowd.

The reader pulled at the roll and read again : "The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation : The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the Tabernacles of the Righteous ; the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly " (Psalms cxviii. 14—15).

"That's what I say," said one of the mob. "There's nothing about *Diana* in it. It's clear they're against *Diana*, and therefore against *Ephesus*. Let us go back to the Theatre."

The echoes were up in the sky, like flocks of rooks. "Great is *Diana* of the Ephesians." The crowd now had got their cry into a measured beat like the Kentish fire. "Great, *Great*, GREAT *Diana* of the Ephesians." It went on like a great bellows. The echoes flew up. "Great, *Great*, GREAT *Diana* of the Ephesians." The schoolboys and girls—there were not many—caught up the cry and were mightily pleased and their shrill voices joined in the chorus.

The Synagogue School was also out at the same hour. And hearing everybody shouting out the same thing, the little Jews caught up the cry, "Great, *Great*, GREAT *Diana* of the Ephesians." The Rabbi who showed them to the door was horrified,

and running out without his turban, caught hold of one of his most promising pupils, to whom he administered a sharp crack upon his knuckles with a ferrule.

"Do you know what you are saying," said the Pedagogue.

"No!" said the boy, glowering fiercely, "how should I know; you should have told me."

"Don't you know what *Diana* is?" said the Pedagogue.

"No! I don't know her from Adam!"

"Then don't do it again, or it will be the worse for you."

"Whatever everybody says must be true," said the urchin.

"No argument, please, or you'll get it again."

The lad moistened his knuckles and rubbed them hard. Then, having climbed a tree in the School garden, when the Rabbi went in for his turban, a voice came from the branches, "Great, *Great*, GREAT Diana of the Ephesians—*there*."

"Oh!" said the Pedagogue, "the evil of this generation!" Then he mumbled resignedly (for his dentistry was not modern); he whispered to himself, "There is a spirit of insurrection abroad, I fear, but the Jews have always been an obstinate people."

The steaming heat of the Theatre forced people to push through to the air again, and so some from Tyrannus' Hall wedged themselves in. The great bellows were still working and the noise was deafening. They drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoning with his hand, would have made his defence unto

the people. But when they knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice, about the space of two hours, cried out, "Great, *Great*, GREAT Diana of the Ephesians."

Three or four had been carried out fainting and throats were getting worn and dry. The roaring was getting more subdued.

The wise old Roman Administration were waiting for the Psychological moment.

Those "chiefs" of Asia, who were accustomed to managing crowds, and had sent urgent remonstrance against Paul entering the arena, followed them afterwards by assuring messages that all would soon be over. Paul, who was always indebted to the Roman State and in season and out of season preached obedience to the constituted authorities, curbed his desire to make a defence, and for once, gave up his accustomed self-opinionated form—he remained *in camera*.

The Recorder at this juncture had directed a general watering of the Flowers of Diana, and accidentally on purpose the clumsy gardeners cast jets of cold water upon the heated brows of the brawlers. That was the moment. When the well-known Recorder mounted a dais and motioned with his arm. A blessed silence fell upon the multitude :

"Men of Ephesus," he said, with grave irony, "who is there of all mankind that needs to be told that the City of Ephesus is the Guardian of the Temple of the great Diana, and of the Image which fell down from Zeus ? These facts, then, being unquestioned, it becomes you to maintain your self-control, and not act recklessly. For you have brought these men here, who are neither robbers of Temples

nor blasphemers of our Goddess. If, however, Demetrius and the mechanics who support his contention have a grievance against anyone, there are Assize days and there are Pro-consuls: Let the persons interested accuse one another. But if you desire anything further, it will have to be settled in the regular assembly. For in connection with to-day's proceedings, there is danger of our being charged with attempted insurrection, there having been no real reason for the riot, nor shall we be able to justify the behaviour of this disorderly mob. With these words he dismissed the assembly" (Acts xix. 35—41, Weymouth).

The whole of the uproar was really due to the injury being done to the artizans through the undermining of the Ephesian superstition. Back of all social and national disturbances is the economical. And permanent peace in the world will never be secured until the laws of the Kingdom of Heaven, which are slowly impregnating the conventions of society, achieve real identity with them, and become universally dominant. The first call made upon the head of a family is to feed it, and that of a Sovereign to shepherd his people. Progress which implies suffering and loss to certain individuals whose interests are involved by change is inimical to any lengthened contentment. It is only in the Co-operative Commonwealth that progress can be universally welcomed. When the progress is in spiritual enlightenment, and no arts and crafts are inseparably united with the cult, there is an open field and no formidable opposition is to be dreaded. But where idolatrous systems are in existence, and arts and crafts are inter-dependent with a priesthood, the

bitterest opposition might be expected. Strange to say, however, that in the case of Islam, whose religious system calls for neither idols nor priesthoods, and no extensive requisites of a material character—neither ecclesiastical ornaments nor vestments—we find it more difficult to make converts to Christianity, doubtless because the Christian form of it in Eastern Christendom is lamentably leavened by Un-Apostolic traditions, and seeks to strengthen itself by appeals to racial and national animosities. Paul was doubtless sincerely sorry that his mission must bring anxiety and loss to certain artizans. People brought up to a trade cannot turn their hand to anything in a moment, and the possible alternative industries may be also overstocked. Some kind-hearted artizans and women who met at Tyrannus' Hall told Paul privately that they knew really decent shrimemakers who were next to starving, owing to the success of their propaganda. Paul needed not to be told it, but he reminded them that a dispensation to preach the Glad Tidings was committed to him, and woe be to him if he should not fulfil it.

Before the outbreak, Paul was being moved by the Spirit to (metaphorically speaking) strike his tent and leave Ephesus. He had been three years in all, and the roots of the Christian faith had struck deeply. Witness to his Epistle to the Ephesians. He had done and suffered much. The Theatre which was the scene of Demetrius' demonstration had witnessed, years before, his struggle with wild beasts. His witness had been faithfully borne and now other lands and churches required his presence. Greece was upon his mind. So calling the disciples together, and speaking words of encouragement to them, he took his leave and started for Macedonia, Luke and he.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AN EPISODE

A MARTYR AT EPHESUS.

"I have fought with beasts at Ephesus."

—(1 Cor. XV. 32).

ALL historical cities have their memorable days, though their throbbing life and their proud stones may yield nothing more enduring than mephitic vapours, when sculptured gods are dissolved in the Conqueror's limekilns. Ephesus or its desolate site would whisper and recount some of its tragedies. Marsh and maundering waters whisper to each other amid tangled weed and imperious brushwood of the day when Ephesus was shaken, and the trust of Asia in Cybele was rudely loosened.

That was one of her memorabilia, when a Christian Martyr suffered in her Theatre.

That day began as ordinary days do. The old faithful luminary, which has attended this dark old world for so long, did not by chance omit its duty, nor grow weary, nor guiltily betray its charge. It rose—yet, ere it had set it had written a legend on Eternity.

Azure blue, cirrus fleeces, high overhead, low above the horizon, a herd of sleeping lion-clouds, whose craggy manes, outlined in light, did not stir against flat purple vapour. Sol was overdoing it, but the city was en fête, and the garlanded head-dress of the worshippers of Artemis was moistened by perspiring brows. Pipe, tabret, harp and cymbal gave

an unsteady step to the processioners who wended their way to the Temple—one of the wonders of the world—where all the priests and virgins of Diana were propitiating the Great Mother and meant to avenge her dishonour by devoting to the beasts two challengers of her Supreme Divinity. The great item of the Gala Day was two human sacrifices in the Theatre, a fight by the treasonable heretics with wild beasts, kept starving for some days previous, and mad with hunger. Devotions in the idol Temple would authorise and exalt to a religious duty the bloody rites which the populace were eagerly anticipating. Religion and economic self-interest made a twisted rope, which the blunt edge of a rocky Truth could not easily dissever. A Jew who had become an assailant alike of Moses and of Jews was undermining the faith of the Patroness of Asia, and with him another was to suffer, who formerly used to laud the local Divinities, but now, like the other, had become one of the despised Nazarenes. The threatened doom which had hung over the prosperous trades which begot and sustained the local cult was to be removed that day. The twin serpents were not to be scotched but killed. Ephesus was going to breathe again. But now for the Siesta, after which the Theatre.

The Temple was outside the City walls, on a marsh. The Theatre was upon the rocky slopes of Coressus. All through the world's history the Temple and the Theatre have been opposed, and the Temple in the Pagan Ages but faintly opposed the reigning sentiment of the latter.

The Temple of Diana had its sacred figure, but the many breasts of the Bountiful Mother, terminated

in a modest shaft, emblem of the Sustainer of all Life, without any sensuous suggestions. But in the Theatre the sculptor ran riot, decorating everything with Fauns, Satyrs, Cupids and Bacchi. In the one, priests vowed to be celibates presided over the devotions, and virgins were designed to be the chaste attendants upon the Goddess. Within the other, Antony broke through the precincts with a drunken mob, with Goats' legs and Bacchantes, showing that there was no need anxiously to disguise the Man in the Beast. Alas ! for Pagandom, with its Great Light that lighteth every man, with its blinds drawn down, yet bringing some faded light to herald the sun that was coming to shine in its strength.

The universal heart of Asia and the Pagan world went out to the Ephesian Temple to make its protest against its own vices, and would stand outside the city with its sins and would partake of the doom of the Temple rather than that of the Theatre if both were to disappear.

Sleep on, Ephesus ! the banquet of blood is not far off. Some of the reclining citizens were disturbed by a long, low rumbling—thought, perchance, that the beasts were growling and impatiently awaiting a repast, and they turned again to their slumbers with a pleasurable anticipation. They slept longer also than they intended, for a strange darkness seemed to have overspread the Heavens : it was followed by an unearthly light and more moaning from the beasts. The streets were now vocal enough. The tread of multitudinous citizens rang upon the pavements, all pacing in one direction—towards the Theatre, where the *auto da fe* was to be enacted.

There was a great muster of the Guilds who were

banded together, and mutually pledged to stand shoulder to shoulder in protecting their interests, and promoting the expenditure which the fashion enjoined upon the worshippers. The Goddess was not supposed to be dead to the foibles of female vanity, notwithstanding the strain of asceticism which she inwardly approved. Hence there was a prodigal manufacture of small jewelled articles of attire. These were brought and deposited upon the altar, and beneath that central place, not alone costly offerings in gold, silver, ivory and pearl, but also bullion and current coin. Bankers' deposits and State Treasuries were placed under the protection of Artemis. Gold and the Gospel. The alliance has survived to the present day.

So Demetrius was at the head of a large and wealthy guild. Hundreds and thousands of men occupied in fashioning shrines for Diana, and making pins, brooches, combs and necklaces, together with the more important and more popular shrines, derived their wages and sustained their households by lauding and favouring the prevalent enthusiasm. Prosperous Crasus, who had built the preceding Temple, meant that the cult of Artemis should know no sorrow from poverty.

The authorities were now marching, attended by lictors, city guards and legionaries. The populace greeted them with acclamations. The theatre, with its wide extended floor—competent for chariot races on a small scale—was being commanded by thousands of the burghers and the numerous Demos, seating themselves upon the rising tiers of benches, not a seat or standing place unoccupied, while a crowd surged against the gates. Inside there was gathering tumult.

The amphitheatres of Nismes and Verona give us an idea of the crowds that could be accommodated, and now Ephesus, come together as one man, could not be fitly satisfied. There was much struggling, quarrelling and not infrequently violent scuffles with the janitors. Complaint was always being made of the large reserved space. Demos not being satisfied to learn that Demetrius' men had not as yet arrived and that the renowned guild, which was raking up every member, was determined to appear in imposing strength. The authorities, the archers and all the attendants, not omitting a contingent from the priestly body, had seated themselves, before a roar of voices shouted their welcome to the Guild makers of Diana's shrines. The shouting was redoubled and re-echoed, without and within, when the gates were opened, and the legionaries guarding the entrance required all their iron steadfastness to withstand the pressure of the crowd. Demetrius was mounted upon a white horse, and proudly surveyed the sea of humanity which his agitation had stirred and raised into a storm of protest. With great difficulty the gates were thrust back and closed. There were shrieks and groans and curses, but they were speedily drowned by a tempest of cheers from the massed bands, as rank after rank the pampered Guild which had extracted many a privilege from the city took their places and filled up the stone seats reserved for them.

Now for the proclamation. Diana was present in a representative statue. Libations were poured forth before her, and her priests genuflected and sang hymns exalting her power and benevolence.

A gleam filled the arena, and countless jewels flashed and faded in almost the same space of time.

Immediately the artillery of Heaven rolled out its magnificent anthem. Some said it was the hungry lions, but the rounding climax shook the building and left none in doubt, for even the ground moved.

When Heaven was pleased to be quiet and obey the orders of the inferior rulers, the chief magistrate rose and unrolled his scroll, making proclamation of the cause of this assembly.

He stated it was lawfully convened, at the suit of the citizens, to vindicate the honour and guard the prosperity of the worshippers of the Mother of Asia, who was pleased to patronise their native country, and especially this city. That much dishonour against her was being done by the propagation of a new sect, lately sprung up in Judea, whose tenets were opposed to all received opinions and were calculated to overthrow every other religion. That much injurious success had attended the efforts of one, bearing a name once honoured at Tarsus, but now known as a renegade son. This man has acquired such influence over his infatuated disciples that he has been accused and convicted of treason against the best interest of the State, and sentence has been pronounced against him as a public enemy, worthy of being torn to pieces by wild beasts, as a lasting warning and example to all who may be in danger of being led astray by the false teaching which the guilty man has hitherto devoted himself to propagate.

With him another has been appointed to die. Once a student of philosophy and not undistinguished in the games. How he became infected by the virulent poison is not known. He has fought for the Empire and yet he came to discard his arms and has declared that his allegiance is now due only to the Founder of

the despised and accursed Nazarenes. Let the youth of our country beware ! Long live Diana ! Lictors, do your duty !

Thousands upon thousands of necks craned forward to catch a glimpse of the first victim : and Paul was set forth. There he stood, with all his Epistles unborn within his breast, and all the Churches he was to plant—unnamed and unknown—at the end of life's short journey, and within a few yards of the lion which was to devour him. He lifted his head and made that survey which thrills and moves beyond any spectacle that can be offered to human eyes, the spectacle of an enormous aggregate of human beings, assembled for one purpose, actuated by one passion, expecting the solution of a great national crisis, or expecting to meet some great arbiter of a country's fortunes for weal or woe—a Redeemer or a Judge. Each unit of the crowd doomed to life's tragedy—all its infinite perils, uncertainties, unavoidable ignorances and sufferings, and its inevitable mortality. Oh ! Love, Peace, Joy, Righteousness, must these spirits carol only upon a branch for a moment, and in the next ply their wings as to escape from a place where they can never live ?

Paul was ready and glad to die for them, if dying would do them any good.

Then the next victim was set forth. Paul heaved his chest. Could it be possible ? Amyntas ! Oh, joy ! We shall die together. The two young men were locked in each others arms. " I remember your last words when you won the race, that you would see me again. But how—how did you become a Nazarene ? "

" By winning the true race," he replied.

But his words were shortened by a tremendous thunderbolt which fell upon the seats of the mighty—displaced huge blocks of sculptured marble and sent them hurling down upon the heads of several magistrates, who were crushed to death.

The crowd was shocked for a moment and necessarily had its attention diverted, while the lictors ran to the succour of the stricken officials.

Paul and Amyntas, absorbed in each other, and having Heavenly joy within themselves, had each to tell the other—the Jew and the Gentile—how both had come to be one in Christ Jesus.

Amyntas eagerly drank in the Damascus vision, and a Divine light shone in his countenance.

“Now, Amyntas, be quick and tell me, for the lion is awaiting me.”

“It was,” said Amyntas, “when prompted by the spirit of adventure that I joined the legionaries in an expedition against the hereditary enemy of Rome—the Parthians. I was stretched upon the plain by which seemed a fatal arrow, and while life was ebbing away, a comrade, who had been fatally speared, turned to me and said, ‘Dost thou know Jesus?’ ‘Who was He?’ I replied, and he answered: ‘The Divine Messiah of the Jews who died for our sins and laid the foundation stone of His Eternal Kingdom.’ He went on to tell me that he was there in command, when He was put to death, according to the Scriptures. That a mysterious darkness draped the skies, but amid the gloom he cheered the heart of a poor thief who sought an entrance into His Kingdom. ‘This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.’ ‘I was,’ said he, ‘watching while the Lamb of God gave up His life for the world and the

Temple veil was rent in twain, and the sheeted dead appeared unto many.' I remember," said Amyntas, "what *you*, Paul, had told me of the great Jewish expectation, and I spoke to the Centurion about it. The old soldier with struggling breath gasped out his triumphant faith and bade me lay hold of the Eternal Life. 'For,' said he, 'Jesus truly was the Son of God.' Then, when he could speak no more, but fixed his gaze upon the steadfast stars, I kissed his eyelids down, and at the moment that the old warrior gave up his soul to God, mine was yielded up to my King."

Here the impatient Demos, soon recovered from its shock, was with angry vociferations demanding that the beasts be unchained. In classic Greek the people shouted, "May the magistrates be blessed! Two or three of them may well be spared. Let the dead bury their dead, we want to see the bloody fight promised us. So the lictors opened a cage and a leopard sprang towards Paul, but instantly agile Amyntas pushed Paul behind him and the paws of the beast fell upon the broad breast of his early friend. The creature was stayed in the progress of his carnage by a hurly-burly in the Heavens and a tremor in the earth. Dragging the flesh with its claws, the leopard's head, undrenched as yet in blood, was upraised to question what Nature was about to do. Amyntas, smiling, said: "It is the third time that I have tried to save you. I die happily."

But now an unprecedented spectacle was presented. A lion unchained, after three days' fast, did not bound upon his prey, but crouched and fawned upon St. Paul.

Astonished himself beyond measure, he recognised

after a moment the lion that he had watered in the Arabian desert. The faithful creature did not forget his benefactor and absolutely refused to be stirred up by the lictors' rods.

The people shouted and cursed and pelted the beast with jars, but seeing the leopard beginning to tear Amyntas, he left St. Paul with an angry roar and sprang upon the furious animal. Then was a sight for gods and men. For the lion and the leopard, struggling in deadly grips, mounted and surmounted the barricades, and Demos affrighted, was struggling and heading down his neighbours and his friends. There were cries, imprecations, screams, yells, and fiendish cheers, as the royal combat was proceeding. Bets upon the lion and bets upon the leopard, while the contending beasts made deep lanes among the crowded benches. How many were trodden down to death, no one has recorded; not a small total, I wot; but that was but a trifle compared to what was to follow. Two tall columns which stood by the seats of the mighty, already broken down, as just related, now fell prone into the arena. They were 40ft. in height, and upwards of 4ft. in diameter. And beneath them were masses of living humanity. The walls of the Theatre next gaped and closed again, upon falling masses of humanity. Upon this the climax was reached. All the voices of the damned roared together. The betting upon the lion and the leopard was abandoned and the lictors who were to carry out the execution had for once forfeited their credit for Roman obedience.

Amyntas and Paul were left together. The Gentile world was dying and a converted Jew was kneeling over it, shedding salt tears upon its expiring frame,

and meaning to bid it arise unto newness of life. "I am going," said Amyntas, "to my joyful King and to His rescued malefactor." He pressed the hand of his dear friend, and the fingers stiffened in death.

Silence ! Emptiness ! save now and then waning moans. A quivering moon peeped through a crevice and saw St. Paul with his face to the earth and a lion fawning upon him.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.

WHAT route Paul and Luke took after leaving Ephesus and what districts were the scenes of the Apostles' frequent addresses, we are not told. Nor are we informed to what part of Greece Paul came, but only that he spent three months there. Athens and Corinth must surely have been visited, and Paul's intention was probably to pass from Corinth to Syria by sea. But the machinations of the Jews were overruled for the greater good of the Evangel. The Apostle, in consequence of schemes to waylay him, decided to go back to Macedonia. "He was accompanied as far as the province of Asia by Sopater, the Berean, the son of Pyrrhus; by the Thessalonians Aristarchus and Secundus; by Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and by the Asians, Tychicus and Trophimus. These brethren had gone on and were waiting for Luke, and he in the Troad*: but they sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined them in the Troad, where they remained for a week" (paraphrased from Weymouth, Acts xx. 1—6).

From the foregoing we are led to infer that St. Luke resumed his companionship with St. Paul in the place where he formerly met and subsequently parted with him. The plural pronoun indicates it. St. Luke enters into the narrative, as though he lifted a curtain

* The district of ancient Troy, north-west point, nearest to Europe.

and silently joined the company. It has been surmised that he ran backwards and forwards between Troas and Philippi, in the capacity of a ship doctor. However, that may be, Paul and he were joined together when they started from Philippi and were expecting to meet that *posse* of mostly Asians, who were waiting their arrival.

“ On the first day of the week, when we had met to break bread, Paul, who was going away the next morning, was preaching to them, and prolonged his discourse till midnight. Now there were a good many lamps in the room upstairs where we all were, and a youth of the name of Eutychus was sitting at the window. This lad, gradually sinking into deep sleep while Paul preached at unusual length, overcome at last by sleep, fell from the third storey and was taken up dead. Paul, however, went down, threw himself upon him, and folding him in his arms, said, ‘ Do not be alarmed ! his life is still in him ’ ! Then he went upstairs again, broke bread and took some food : and after a long conversation, which was continued till daybreak, at last departed from them. They had taken the lad home alive, and were greatly comforted.” (Acts xx. 7—12. Weymouth.)

The untoward incident of Eutychus should suffice to assure minds hesitating to accept the Scriptural intimations of an *adversary* always aiming to hinder or frustrate the work of God in human hearts. How often have we been reminded of events, which seem the most *mal a propos*, occurring at a time and place where everything appeared most propitious for successful progress in the interest of Christ’s Kingdom. The somnolent youth could scarcely be blamed for not keeping awake at midnight, and yet we must recog-

nise that the adversary is ever on the watch to spoil, if possible, the most favourable circumstances. Unusual hours, unconventional methods, unexpected urgencies (as Paul's sailing away in the morning) would be favourable to win closer and more urgent attention. And Paul's recent experiences, his remarkable work at Ephesus and his projected plans to go to Rome and Spain, and his wonderful penetration into the glorious mysteries of Divine grace, all combined to make a solemn and lasting impression, when suddenly, while the Holy Spirit was brooding with power over the assembly, graciously moving souls, there is made a commotion. The wrapt hearers turn with startled horror to list to something falling, then a thud on the ground outside. It was the young man, who overpowered by the length of the address and the heat of the room, had succumbed to drowsiness, lost his balance, and fell into the street. He was evidently known to many, and not unbeloved. Paul's thrilling narrative was abruptly broken into, the influences flowing upon the audience were rudely diverted and the painful impression seemed likely to spread that God, who seemed engaged to bless, was inscrutably tempting His children to disbelieve in His Fatherhood, when and where faith was most justified. The "patience of faith" was again, however, soon to be vindicated. Paul's embrace, communicating physical power and restoration to the body, and his quickening words to the lad's spirit, issued in restoring Eutychus with a double blessing. If, before his fall, he was at the parting of the ways, after the crisis he chose the right one. God made the machinations of the adversary to praise Him. We need not hesitate, notwithstanding, to draw the lesson that slumber, under

Gospel appeals, except under very special circumstances, are inexcusable.

Luke was evidently not constrained to be always going, like a pendulum, between Troas and Philippi. "The rest of us (note the 'us') had already gone on board a ship, and now we set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul on board there, for so he had arranged, he himself intending to go by land." (Acts xx. 13—14 Weymouth.)

The unwearied Apostle, after talking all night, begins his journey by land. And if he was mounted upon a beast, he certainly ran great risk of tumbling off in a sound sleep. He arrived, however. "He met us at Assos, we took him on board and came to Mityline. Sailing from there, we arrived the next day off Chios : on the next, we touched at Samos : and on the day following, reached Miletus. For Paul's plan was to sail past Ephesus, so as not to spend much time in the Province of Asia, since he was very desirous of being at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of the Harvest Festival." (Acts xx. 15—16. Weymouth.) "From Miletus he sent to Ephesus for the elders of the Church to come to him." (Acts xx. 17. Weymouth.)

Probably the soreness in Ephesus against Paul especially recommended that it was not expedient that he should so soon revisit the city. As it happened, nothing could be more moving and impressive than the sea shore farewell that was taken at Miletus. Another reason. Paul knew that this was the last time that they should meet, and he would, naturally, desire to give a solemn charge to the elders without having his attention distracted and his sympathies engaged in spasmodic directions. The tempered urgency and

the enlarged leisure possessed by responsible persons in the antique days was indeed remarkable.

The elders seemed able to leave affairs to go on by themselves and they could easily respond to Paul's desire to meet them. And now, after the usual salutations, all were assembled; among them Luke, rooted to the spot and, doubtless, using his tablets. Paul said unto them, "Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews. And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the Spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. And none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that

after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore, watch ! and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea ! ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered to my necessities and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said "it is more blessed to give than to receive." And when He had thus spoken, He kneeled down and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore and fell upon Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship." (Acts xx. 18—38. A.V.)

In presence of the picture that Luke has just limned for us, as also in presence of the *Cæna Domini* by Da Vinci, it becomes us to say nothing, but stand and adore.

"When at last we had torn ourselves away and had set sail, we ran in a straight course to Cos : the next day to Rhodes and from there to Patara. Finding a ship bound for Phœnicia, we went on board and put to sea. After sighting Cyprus and leaving that island on our left, we continued our voyage to Syria and put in at Tyre ; for there the ship was to unload her cargo. Having searched for the disciples and found them, we

stayed at Tyre for seven days and, taught by the Spirit, they repeatedly warned Paul not to proceed to Jerusalem. When, however, our time was up, we left and went on our way, all the disciples and their wives and children coming to see us off. Then, after kneeling down on the beach and praying, we took leave of one another, and we went on board, while they returned home." (Acts xxi. 1—6. Weymouth.)

The coasts of Tyre and Sidon and the Syro Phœnician woman, who was ready to account herself no better than a dog in comparison with the heirs of Abraham's promises—the inhabitants of that region were now getting more than crumbs from the Master's table. They were invited to sit with the children. And see how the principle of federal headship is illustrated, when the Gentile Church at Tyre came down with *their wives and children* to see St. Luke and St. Paul and their companions off. Those wives and children were accounted children of the Kingdom—true Abraham's seed. It is a lovely picture which Luke draws for us, over and over again, of *households* being blessed through the faith of their head. See them trooping, merrily running by the side of their fathers and mothers and climbing up to get to Paul and giving him a hug. Yes! the fathers and mothers gave every facility for these embraces. Come, Z—, F—, M—, say good-bye to Paul. And, turning away, they said to each other with suppressed sobs, "for we shall never see his face again." And the little babes nestled in the Apostle's arms and kept running their little soft fingers over a pit in his face, near his mouth.

"Did you fall down?" said the mite. But it was only one stone of many that struck his face at Iconium.

"Oh! here's another," continues the mite. "This is

worser. I'll kiss the place. Now it's better." And Paul sets the chatterer down, with his wonderful smile.

Tyre and Sidon; they were not "dogs" there. Men, women and children were kneeling down on the beach and praying, and taking leave of one another. The Master had not stinted them and given them an empty platter, with only a few crumbs.

"As for us, our voyage was over, when having sailed from Tyre we reached Ptolemais. Here we enquired after the welfare of the brethren, and remained a day with them. On the morrow we left Ptolemais and went on to Cæsarea, where we came to the house of Philip, the Evangelist, who was one of the seven deacons, and stayed with him. Now Philip had four unmarried daughters who were Prophetesses, and during our somewhat lengthy stay, a prophet, of the name of Agabus, came down from Judea, coming to us and taking off Paul's waist-scarf, he bound his own feet and arms with it, and said, 'Thus says the Holy Spirit, so will the Jews at Jerusalem bind the owner of this waist-scarf, and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" (Acts xxi. 7—11. Weymouth.) "As soon as we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem."

"Then Paul answered, 'What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. 'And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, 'The will of the Lord be done'" (Acts xxi. 12—14, A.V.) "A few days afterwards we loaded our baggage-cattle, and continued our journey to Jerusalem. Some of the disciples from Cæsarea also joined our party and brought with them Mnason, a Cyprian, one of the

early disciples, at whose house we were to lodge. At length we reached Jerusalem, and there the brethren gave us a hearty welcome.

“On the following day we went with Paul to call on James, and all the elders of the Church came also. After exchanging friendly greetings, Paul told in detail all that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And they, when they had heard his statement, gave glory to God. Then they said, ‘You see, brother, how many tens of thousands of Jews there are among those who have accepted the faith, and they are all zealous upholders of the Law. Now, what they have been repeatedly told about you is that you teach all the Jews among the Gentiles to abandon Moses and that you forbid them to circumcise their children, or observe old-established customs. What then ought you to do? They are sure to hear that you have come to Jerusalem: so do this which we now tell you. We have four men here who have a vow resting upon them. Associate with these men and purify yourself with them and pay their expenses so that they can shave their heads: then everybody will know that there is no truth in these stories about you, but that in your own actions you yourself scrupulously obey the law. But as for the Gentiles who have accepted the faith, we have communicated to them our decision, that they are to carefully abstain from anything sacrificed to an idol, from blood from what is strangled, and from fornication.” St. Paul associated with the men, and the next day, having purified himself with them, he went into the Temple, giving everyone to understand that the days of their purification were finished, and there he remained until the sacri-

fice for each of them was offered. But when the seven days were nearly over, the Jews from the province of Asia, having seen Paul in the Temple, set about rousing the fury of all the people against him, they laid hands upon him, crying out, 'Men of Israel, Help! Help! This is the man who goes everywhere preaching to everybody against the Jewish people and the law and this place. And, besides, he has even brought Gentiles into the Temple, and has desecrated this 'holy place.''' (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and imagined that Paul had brought him into the Temple) (Acts xxi. 12—29, Weymouth).

And all the City was moved, and the people ran together, and they took Paul, and drew him out of the Temple, and forthwith the doors were shut. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the Tribune in command of the battalion, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Who immediately took soldiers and Centurions, and ran down unto them: And when they saw the Tribune and the soldiers, they ceased beating Paul. Then the Tribune, making his way to him, arrested him, and having ordered him to be secured with two chains, proceeded to ask who he was, and what he had been doing. And some cried one thing, some another, among the multitude, and when he could not know the certainty of the tumult, he commanded him to be carried into the castle. And when he came upon the stairs, so it was that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people, for the whole mass of the people pressed on in the rear, shouting, "Away with him." When he was about to be taken into

the barracks, Paul said to the Tribune, " May I speak to you ? "

" Do you know Greek ? " the Tribune replied.

" Are you not the Egyptian who some years ago excited the riot of the 4,000 cut-throats and led them out into the desert ? "

Paul replied : " I am a Jew, belonging to Tarsus in Cilicia, and am a citizen of no mean city," so with his permission, Paul stood on the steps and beckoned with the hand to the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake to them in the Hebrew tongue."

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And now, while the great crowd is hanging upon Paul's first word, we take leave to ask my readers to consider the baleful influence that Jerusalem and the Jerusalem Church had always exercised upon the Apostle. Prophets at every step of his journey hither had warned him of what awaited him at that fateful City, where the greatest crime of the ages had been consummated, and it is fated to bring about the greatest crisis of the world—yet future. And yet, like the singed moth, Paul was perseveringly determining to return to that false lamp. None of the Apostolic Band, known to us, were without inconsistency. Peter, of course, is the patent example, but neither was John exempt. The Apostle of Love wanted to burn out the Samaritans, James coinciding. And the other Apostles, who kept themselves to themselves, and escaped from Roman and Jewish molestation—it was by recanting in their practice, all the principles which their Great Founder had enunciated. Nothing more startling, more deplorable than the quiet laying aside of the revolutionary

reforms which Jesus had recommended. He gave to the Twelve His commission to baptise in His name, and said not a word about circumcision. The omission is tantamount to affirming that henceforth it was valueless. And yet the Apostles at Jerusalem, even after Pentecost, were so slow to learn that they clung invincibly to make a wall of separation between Jew and Gentile.

Jesus, when with His disciples, ate and drank with hundreds of Gentiles, without keeping Himself apart. When He fed the multitudes by Tiberias, of course, there were hundreds who were not born Jews, and by making His disciples to serve them, He taught them they were henceforth to eat and drink with the Gentiles. Jesus taught His disciples that days and feasts were made holy, simply by His presence, and the holy aims which any company, on any day, might be prosecuting.

The Sabbath Day was Divinely constituted, mainly for the sake of labour, among men and beast ; and to afford opportunities of common worship and leisure to commemorate the Liberator of body and soul. To do good was ever an indispensable qualification to really religious exercises. The Twelve, even after Pentecost, understood little of these things. Pitiably they continued to hug their chains, after the risen Jesus and the Holy Spirit bade against the closed gates of their Jewish prejudices.

The very first thing they ought to have done was to give up the Temple worship altogether. The Shekinah had departed. The veil was torn. The whole hierarchical system was hopelessly corrupt. It was a doomed spot and a doomed people. Our Lord pronounced His unsparing condemnation. The

Temple had become a "den of thieves," and He overturned the tables of the money changers, and drove out the sheep and oxen. All the humbug of business, the rigging of the market, bulling and bearing to make margins between buying and selling. The easy prank by which millions were won or lost—all *that* was doomed. And although now, after 2,000 years, the doom has not fallen. *It is coming*—rather surer than Halley's Comet. The business of the Infant Church was to make its emphatic protest by discontinuing any Levitical attendance. The Synagogues were available and unimpeachable, with the Christian interpretations. Why not confine themselves to the Prophets, the Psalms and Prayer? They might make an exception of the Passover. Our Lord attended *that*. It was the Feast of Liberty, the commemoration of breaking every chain, and the self-investiture of the lamb's silken cords. It was the memorial of the great Deliverer from bondage and imparting to it the meanings of the Paschal Lamb—the Lamb of God—the Cæna Domini.

Instead of this, the Jerusalem Church completely failed either to become a Light unto the Gentiles, or an active propagandist among other nations. The Lord expressly enjoined upon them to go into all the world, and they did nothing of the kind. They kept herding together at Jerusalem. Fatal Jerusalem! Rejected and condemned Jerusalem.

It came upon the Jerusalem Church as an unwelcome surprise that the Gentiles were getting favoured equally with the seed of Abraham. There must have been some mistake on High. Proselytes might expect some share in Heaven's favours, but Gentiles—not being Proselytes—for them to give

proof that the gifts of the Holy Spirit were really possessed was an obnoxious and puzzling circumstance. The Church did not like to say it, but felt it, that High Heaven was really going too far. "We must draw the line somewhere." Such was the infantile and anomalous condition of the Christian Church at Jerusalem.

It was never a power, except to obstruct the extension of the Kingdom. Against these recreants, who had received the Lord's commands, and had not fulfilled them, there was one brilliant exception. The Apostle Paul. That Apostle, born out of due time. He was worth the round dozen of the rest. *His eyes were* opened. He had seen and He had heard the Lord—not by searching, not by prayers or vows, or vain propitiations, outside of the Lamb and the Cross, but simply by *election*—the electing love of God—in one stroke, implanting repentance, faith and obedience, understanding of the Scriptures, Eternal Life, in one complete and final act, constituting the old Paul a new man.

But this new man—this Addendum to the original Twelve—*He* was not to be exempted from human fallibility. Paul was on several occasions grossly inconsistent with himself and his principles. He committed the unforgiveable crime of circumcising Timothy, that marvellous moral obscuration must remain for ever inscrutable. Then again, he took upon himself a "*vow*," and had his head shaved at Cenchrea. Such things belong to the stage of babyhood in things essentially religious. Then he must needs go to ask permission for his Gentile converts to be deemed the children of God, "without being circumcised and keeping the whole Law,"

notwithstanding that the Holy Spirit was pouring from a Cornucopia, the most lovely fruits and flowers, falling down upon Philippi, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Corinth, Beraa and Antioch. Notwithstanding all this, Paul demeans himself by consulting these Pundits in Jerusalem and wants to know if they are Christians, being uncircumcised. And the Pundits twirl their thumbs, and the great debate—about a rite—a repugnant and horrible rite, was going absolutely to stop the salvation of the world, if the Jews could help it. Paul and Peter together pulled the rock of offence out of the obstructed channel, and these two, each enlightened by special revelations, believed that the question was settled. But the question was *not* settled. This weak and comparatively worthless Church of Jerusalem seemed bent on forgetting all the Master had taught it. After Paul's eloquence had faded in their ears, the Church was almost ready to send messengers after the Apostle and recant everything. And what was that miserable document—the first Apostolic decree? It did indeed free the new churches from circumcision, for which God be thanked. But what was the nonsense of forbidding things “strangled and blood.” The ban against going to Pagan Temples to buy meats was undoubtedly politic. Fornication, of course, was an essential prohibition, but “things strangled and blood!”—as if such material things could affect adversely spiritual vitality! It is a document containing provisions which were really insulting, and others even laughable. And yet these poor converts gave profound thanks for the “*consolation*”!

But now this Jerusalem Church consummated

its follies and its crimes by recommending Paul to do something flagrantly inconsistent with everything he believed and professed.

One who reads the Epistles to the Galatians, Romans and Corinthians is utterly at a loss to comprehend how Paul could have been so hypnotised by the Jerusalem-ites as to accede to the scheme matured and put forth for Paul's adoption. A course which virtually obliged him to recant his most cherished and Heaven given revelations. A course, too, most disingenuous, which should torture his conscience and compel him to act as a dishonourable, a disloyal and perjured man. The plan was to do something which would hoodwink the Jews generally, and especially the hybrid Jew-Christian Church. Paul had become thoroughly convinced that circumcision was nothing, but to fulfil God's Commandments. And this specious plan was to do something which would remove the suspicion entertained by many at Jerusalem, that Paul forbade the Gentile converts to have their children circumcised, or to observe old established customs. He was to appear as if he believed in what he expressly denounced in his Epistle to the Galatians, written the year before—and the rest of the Church was to be led to believe that he would for ever and a day scrupulously obey the law and teach others the same. It was a plan, fathered before its time by Jesuistical and Apostate confessors, confusing and frustrating the essentials of the glad Evangel, and preventing a transparent vision of the Nazarene. And, amazing to say, Paul was pushed into the trap! But what could be expected of a base compromise except complete failure and disaster to the erring and, in this instance, weak Apostle! Compromising with convictions is the

strangling of the new born Infant of Truth. The Nemesis was awaiting him. All seemed going well. He was going day by day to falsify his convictions, throwing dust in the eyes of the jealous Pharisaic Nazarenes. The false brethren were pluming themselves upon their cleverness. But they did not count upon the blushing and outraged Genius of Integrity, which, in this case was the same as the God of Truth and Righteousness. Paul was acting a lie, and all his subsequent misfortunes are justly to be attributed to his fault at the Temple. Cardinal Newman may be ready to advocate "lying like a trooper." He had the support of the Church of Jerusalem—no greater condemnation could be pronounced.

But Paul was never himself at Jerusalem. The very air poisoned him—and there was good reason for it. His crimes against the Church of God were there committed. Places do affect persons. Past deeds, too, cling to places. The popular dread and desire to avoid passing a place where a great crime was committed, as though the foul fiend who enabled it was condemned to be chained to the spot—that popular notion has something to say for it. Paul lost his courage, his consistency and his fidelity whenever the baleful attraction of Jerusalem drew his steps thither.

At Antioch he could expose Peter and make him ashamed of himself. Away, whither Paul was despatched by revelation, when in a trance he was bidden to go *far hence* to the Gentiles, Paul touched earth and the Anteus was himself again. And, although at Jerusalem, where he was called upon to bear the consequences of his fault, his Lord came to his aid, giving him an opportunity to confess his Master, and inspired

him to take up his old role of suffering for Christ's sake ; when all his true nature resumed and all Divine resources were at his command—recollections of his Roman citizenship came to him. He says the right thing at the right time. He speaks with such force that the angry mob becomes mute as mice. In spirit he was at Antioch again—the dear old Gentile land—the scene of his former triumphs. “ Evil communications corrupt good manners.” When he came to Jerusalem, he ever felt it was not to receive an uplift from brothers who, like himself, were emulous to run the race with eyes upon the prize. He felt rather that the Church was spying out the liberty that the Gentile converts were enjoying. His success was the measure of their distrust. Zeal for the inclusion of the Gentiles was a languid, if not a dead passion. They held that the truth was to be universally proclaimed, in theory ; but as for the practice, Paul's zeal for the enterprise was hot enough to serve for the rests of the coterie. Yes ! it was only a coterie. There was no street preaching of the Cross at Jerusalem. There was no disputing in the market places, no regular meetings at a Lecture Hall as at Ephesus, no pier-head proclamations as at Corinth, no imprisonments, no scourgings, no martyrdoms at the time that the bland and feigningly courteous elders were receiving Paul from foreign parts. No ! They were studious to give no offence to any, especially to the Hierarchies. Instead of relaxing in their minute observance of the Law, they would make it clear that the Nazarenes were especially zealous for its maintenance. They were bent upon making it manifest to all, that the best followers of the crucified were also the most rigid sticklers for the vain traditions of the elders. It was an attitude the very opposite to

that which their Lord and Master had exemplified. *He* was in every hour of the day protesting against the stupid and injurious regulations which had hung with chains the simplest household, civic and personal duties. And standing upon those rites and ceremonies as a superior eminence, from which the rest of mankind could be superciliously surveyed, and their own righteousness vaunted. Zeal, forsooth for enfranchising the Gentiles ! We have dismissed Paul and Barnabas to quiet our consciences, and charitably, we wish them well. We hope they will really go far away, and only trouble us when they bring in the collection. We must be courteous to the bearers of the bag, and impress upon them how poor we are, though how rich in the real blue-blood pedigree circumcised inheritors of Abraham's covenanted blessings !

Therefore the extraordinary spectacle was presented of a religious Ecclesea, professing to be at one and the same time in permanent opposition to its mother principle, and in professed allegiance to the same. Let the Church at Jerusalem be one thing or the other : it could not be both. But the Elders, and, strange to say, the Twelve, were determined to be *both*.

That strange Church presented the curious spectacle of being apparently unable and unwilling to burst its chrysalis confinements, and yet aspiring to spread its wings in the broad sunshine of God's favour.

Here was one wing beating the air, on the other side a leg, useless for locomotion. And although the shell of the chrysalis was cracked all over, the body could not free itself and soar into the Empyrean. The Gentile Churches were free. They were roaming

among flowers and sipping honey from every distillation of the Spirit's and the Apostles' prelections. While the Jerusalem Christians were still washing cups and platters and bedsteads, and other such unimaginable rubbish, if they were honest they should have proclaimed that there was no freedom from the requirements of the law. The followers of Christ must be both Jews and Christians. They would say, Keep all the Law, and also at the same time do not rely upon it. You must worship the Messiah, and at the same time wear the yoke from which the Messiah has freed you. How could such an Evangel progress? But now the crowd is waiting to hear Paul.

“Brethren and Fathers. Listen to my defence, which I now make before you.” And hearing him address them in Hebrew, they kept all the more quiet. “I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I was carefully trained at the feet of Gamaliel in the Law of our forefathers, and, like all of you to-day, was zealous for God. I persecuted this new sect even unto blood, binding both men and women and throwing them into prison, as the High Priest also and all the Elders can bear me witness. It was, too, from them that I received letters to the Brethren at Damascus, and I was already on my way to Damascus, intending to bring those also who had fled there in chains to Jerusalem to be punished. But on my way, when I was not far from Damascus, about noon a sudden blaze of light from heaven shone around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, ‘Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?’ ‘Who art Thou, Lord?’ I asked. ‘I am Jesus, the Nazarene, whom you

are persecuting,' replied He. Now the men were with me, though they saw the light, did not hear the words of Him Who spoke to me. I asked, 'What am I to do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Rise and go into Damascus. There you shall be told of all that has been appointed for you to do. And as I could not see because the light had been so dazzling, those who were with me had to lead me by the arm, and so I came to Damascus. And a certain Ananias, a pious man, who obeyed the Law and bore a good character with all the Jews of the City, came to me, and standing at my side, said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' I instantly regained my sight and looked up at him. Then he said, 'The God of our forefathers has appointed you to know his will, and to see the Righteous One and hear him speak. For you shall be a witness for Him, to all men, of what you have seen and heard. And now why delay? Rise, get yourself baptised, and wash off your sins, calling upon His name. After my return to Jerusalem and while praying in the Temple, I fell into a trance. I saw Jesus, and He said to me, 'Make haste and leave Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about Me.' 'Lord,' I replied, 'they themselves well know how active I was in imprisoning, and in flogging in Synagogue after Synagogue those who believe in Thee, and when they were shedding the blood of Stephen, Thy witness, I was standing by fully approving of it, and I held the clothes of those who were killing him.' 'Go,' He replied, 'I will send you to nations far away.' "

Until the last statement the people listened to Paul, but now with a roar of disapproval, they cried out, "Away with such a fellow from the earth!

He ought not to be allowed to live." And when they continued their furious shouts, throwing their clothes into the air and flinging dust about, the Tribune ordered him to be brought into the barracks and be examined by flogging in order to ascertain why they thus cried out against him. But, when they had tied him up with the straps, Paul said to the Captain who stood by, "Does the Law permit you to flog a Roman citizen, and one, too, who is uncondemned?"

On hearing this question, the Captain went to report the matter to the Tribune. "What are you intending to do?" he said, "this man is a Roman citizen."

So the Tribune came to Paul and asked him. "Tell me! Are you a Roman citizen?"

"Yes!" he said.

"I paid a large sum for this," said the Tribune.

Paul's reply was, "But I was free born."

So the men who had been on the point of putting him under torture immediately left him. And the Tribune, too, was frightened, when he learnt that Paul was a Roman citizen, for he had had him bound.

The next day, wishing to know exactly what charge was being brought against him by the Jews, the Tribune ordered his chains to be removed: and having sent word to the High Priests, and all the Sanhedrim to assemble, he brought Paul down and made him stand before them. (Acts xxii. Weymouth.)

Paul was himself again. All his trouble arose from taking advice from that wretched Church at Jerusalem. Why did he ever take advice, when he had an ever present Director within his own heart? There was the Church of the Gentiles—in the person of Paul—and there was the Christian Church of Jerusalem,

and the former was tempted by the latter. It is the case of the lying Prophet, who compassed the destruction of him who had the pristine commission, and failed to keep it.

“I am a Prophet, like as you are, said the Church of Jerusalem, and an Angel of God has bid me to turn you aside and partake of the beggarly elements of the Law—and he lied unto him.” Thousands of the true servants of God have been beguiled in a similar manner, yielding to an assumed authority which was not genuine, or allowed purposely, as a final test of inward convictions—the direct production of Divine revelations. To any young reader and to all readers, I say, listen to no human voice whatever that conflicts with the voice which gave you the conditions under which any false altar is to be scattered. “Men of God,” churches—none are to be listened to. There is One Counsellor, the Head of every man. Live under solemn obligations to Him! As I write, Tolstoy is fleeing from the temptations persistently urged by his nearest and dearest. Tolstoy is right, God will be with him.

Revenons à nos moutons. Yes! veritably our “muttons.” The Church at Jerusalem, blue-blood, pedigree, hybrid, pseudo Christian Jewish Church of Jerusalem spoiled everything. It was not *that* Church which extended the Christian faith throughout the world. A crawling chrysalis, half out of its grave, feebly flapping with one wing, falling and sprawling, what could it do, compared with what it might?

But if the Church of Jerusalem was so lacking in vital consistency. What could be said of the Jews, inspired by their own ecclesiastical chiefs. The ecclesiastical authorities were so corrupt, so void of

regard to even primal instincts of justice and honour that they felt no shame in giving sanction and succour to a scheme for assassinating Paul in his transit from prison to the court. Remember these were the religious teachers of faith and morals. They had confederated with Judas to have Jesus betrayed, and they had the satisfaction of crucifying Him. One mouthful of innocent blood was not enough for them. They panted for another to crown the banquet. When forty assassins had bound themselves by a curse to murder Paul—absolutely, there was not one even of the Sanhedrim to stand forth to vindicate elementary fairness and Governmental duty. They wanted him condemned and executed without trial, while the Pagan Roman Government, which had had no light, either from Moses, Sinai or the roll of the Prophets, thought that the Roman Custom of having an accused person given the opportunity of facing his accusers and affording him the privilege of defence was more agreeable to natural justice. In fact the Roman Government insisted upon the Roman privileges being observed, although in favour of a born Jew. As between the two tribunals—the Roman and the Jewish—the principles ruling in this special case, were as contrasted as Heaven and Hell.

And this was the ecclesiastical authority which the Christian Church of Jerusalem was so anxious to propitiate !

It is like taking a draught from a pure Highland spring, in place of a chalice of poisoned wine, such as Borgia gave and was given, to turn from the tribunal of Hebrew doctors and Rabbis, to the inflexible guardians of the rights of a Roman citizen, A.D., 58. Here we find the natural conscience asserting itself. Dig-

nity, restraint and common sense weighting with real gold the Roman sceptre. We will anticipate to illustrate the loyalty to Roman traditions ; its impartiality and reverence for law. Claudius Lysias, the commandant of the garrison of Antonia, was not going to allow even one Roman citizen to be deprived of his right. Aye ! though it meant 400 infantry and seventy cavalry marching through the night to guard the sacred person of his prisoner. Felix, too, the Governor of Judea, was determined to do nothing in a hurry. He would grant indulgence and give access to Paul's friends. He spent hours conferring with the prisoner, so anxious to probe to the bottom, the charges brought against him. Festus, too, was equally Roman-minded—the soul of honour, as respects guarding citizen privileges. Everything Paul had asked for he got. When Festus was visited by King Agrippa and his wife Bernice, he was not simply bent upon entertaining his royal guests, but he availed himself of the opportunity to get some help to deal justly with Paul, for Agrippa was known to be fully acquainted with the Jewish Law. That crafty monarch, when invested with Roman authority, it seemed to inspire him with sentiments of honour and justice, foreign to his tribe. He immediately gave attention to Festus' implied desire that Agrippa would interest himself in Paul's case.

“ I should like to hear the man myself,” said he.

“ To-morrow,” replied Festus, “ you shall.”

Both rulers agreed, after the conference, “ That this man is doing nothing for which he deserves death or imprisonment,” and Agrippa said to Festus, “ He might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Cæsar.”

Military chiefs, tribunes, pro-consuls, governors, kings, all alike, the Roman officials seem animated by a desire to discharge their duties with conspicuous fairness. Julius, captain over the soldiers who had to convey Paul, with other prisoners, to Rome, paid the greatest deference to Paul's opinion, and was determined to screen him from the soldiers' suggestions to kill all the prisoners lest they should escape during the shipwreck. Roman hospitality manifested itself when, from the Governor of Melita down to the natives, all vied in affording much more than justice.

In this anticipatory notice, we must refer to the ready credence given by Roman officials to the bare statement of St. Paul. It could not be entirely due to the Apostle's magnetic personality. Although examination by scourging was a part of criminal investigation, yet it reflects the greatest honour upon the officials, that the bare word of a suspected prisoner was accepted without hesitation. Paul's own account of his Roman citizenship given by himself, without oaths or asseverations, and wanting in any documentary evidence, or the support of witnesses, sufficed to deliver him from the horrible trial of scourging. In a country, and among a population, whose common speech abounds in impressive asseverations, we know what kind of legal procedure is generally required to get at the bottom of the truth. But under Rome, the limbs of the Law, Pagan, were so accustomed to go straight themselves that they credited even suspected prisoners of speaking straight-forwardly.

"Tell me. Are you a Roman citizen?"

"Yes," said Paul.

"I paid a large sum for this," said the Tribune.

"But I was free-born," said Paul.

These simple statements, quietly offered, ended the matter, and the danger to be apprehended was transferred from the prisoner to his examiners. "The men who had been on the point of putting him under torture immediately left him. And the Tribune, too, was frightened when he learnt that Paul was a Roman citizen, for he had had him bound." (Acts xxii. 27—29. Weymouth.)

Rome, Christian and ecclesiastical, has never been conspicuous for straightforwardness. History has recorded the decline and fall of Pagan honesty and truthfulness.

From this excursion, in illustration of the fairness of the Roman administration, we now come back to the instance just referred to, and the point at which Paul's career has reached.

"The next day, wishing to know exactly what charge was being brought against him by the Jews, the Tribune ordered his chains to be removed, and having sent word to the High Priests and all the Sanhedrim to assemble, he brought Paul down and made him stand before them."

At the stone chamber the solemn conclave was assembled. The High Priest, Ananias, a name very dear to him at Damascus, but worn also by a very different personage here, took his central seat at the semi-circle, where, on either side, were his seventy elders. The chamber was familiar, for Paul was himself a councillor in the days of his blindness, and beheld many of his former fellow students, who had concerted with him measures against Stephen and the Damascenes. How had the wheel of fortune turned! His highest hope now was that he might witness a con-

fession equally good as by which Stephen had closed his short, but glorious career. Paul, himself again, not yielding to the weakness of the sin of compromise, into which the guilty church of Jerusalem had betrayed him, and fixing a steady gaze on the Sanhedrim, began his artless defence. "Brethren, it is with a perfectly clear conscience that I have discharged my duties before God up to this day." (Acts xxiii. 1. Weymouth.)

Yes! Paul well knew that his worst deeds against his Lord had been done under an infirmity of decreed ignorance, and not from an evil will. But the High Priest Ananias' action had no such warranty, as Paul could truly avouch. And stirred to envy and hatred by the manifest integrity of the man standing before him. Ananias commanded that some of the bystanders should strike him on the mouth. Then said Paul unto him, "Before long, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten, contrary to the law."

And they that stood by said, "Revilest thou God's High Priest?"

Then said Paul, "I wist not, brethren, that he was the High Priest, for it is written, 'Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.'"

It should be evident to any ordinary reader that a voice had reached Paul from the benches over which Ananias presided, directing the brutal assault upon the prisoner before he had scarce uttered a word. But that the voice came from the President with certainty, that the President was the High Priest, was not known to Paul. To that voice, whosoever it was, Paul

spake with indignation and was moved by the spirit to prophesy his untimely judgment. Ananias was murdered by the Sicarü during the Jewish war. Farrar, as I have elsewhere concluded, misconceived Paul's powers of vision, which were undoubtedly exercised without disability when he strove to catch the views and temper of the judges arrayed before him. He perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees," and, prompted by the Divine Wisdom, he cried out in the Council, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead, I am called in question." And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees; and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither Angel, nor Spirit, but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry, and the Scribes that were of the Pharisees' part, arose and strove, saying: "We find no evil in this man; but if a Spirit or an Angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God." And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the castle.

And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."

It was always when the faithful witness had reason for disquietude, that his heart was cheered. Paul was doubly cheered by the intimation that he was to see

Rome—his life-long desire and, also, his sepulchre.

“ And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more than forty which had made this conspiracy. And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, ‘ We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul. Now, therefore, ye with the Council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to-morrow, as though ye would enquire something more perfectly concerning him, and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him. And when Paul’s sister’s son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, ‘ Bring this young man unto the chief captain : for he hath a certain thing to tell him. So he took him and brought him to the chief captain, and said, ‘ Paul, the prisoner, called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee.’ Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and asked him, ‘ What is that thou hast to tell me ? ’ And he said, ‘ The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldst bring down Paul to-morrow into the Council, as though they would enquire somewhat of him more perfectly. But do not thou yield unto them, for there lie in wait for him, of them, more than forty men which have bound themselves with an oath, that they will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him, and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee.’ So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and charged him, ‘ See thou tell

no man that thou hast shewed these things to me.' And he called unto him two centurions, saying, make ready two hundred legionary soldiers, and seventy horsemen, also two hundred light armed spearmen, at the third hour of the night : and provide them beasts, that they may set Paul on, and bring him safe unto Felix the Governor.' And he wrote a letter after this manner :

Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix sendeth greeting,

"This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them : then came I with an army and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman. And when I would have known the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him forth into their council. Whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway for thee, and gave commandment to his accusers also to say before thee what they had against him. Farewell !

"Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. Forty men went to bed supperless that same night, looking forward to a good breakfast after they had accomplished their murder, but were disappointed. When it was seen that their plot must fail, these unfortunates had to go to the money lenders to get loans to buy release from their oaths from the corrupt priesthood.

"On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with Paul, and the four hundred infantry marched back again. The seventy cavalry, meantime, reached

Cæsarea and delivered the Epistle to the Governor, and presented Paul before him. And when he understood that he was of Cilicia, 'I will hear thee,' said he, 'when thine accusers are also come.' And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's Judgment Hall." (Acts xxiii. A.V.)

In the foregoing narrative the action of two individuals calls for comment. Paul's sister's son and Claudius Lysias. The former was called under Providence to intervene most effectively in the crisis of his uncle's fate. But it is somewhat strange that we hear nothing more of his mother. That there was an estrangement towards Paul on the part of the other members of the Apostle's family is highly probable, and that neither the sister nor the nephew were numbered with the Nazarenes is practically certain. To this ostracism there was one exception—the ingenuous youth who took the keenest interest in his uncle's fortunes. Moved by the generous impulses of youth and, doubtless, a future disciple in the making, he had mingled with the various knots of people who were discussing the question of the day and overheard what his apparently careless youth permitted him to hear and, pursuing a clue, discovered sufficient to warrant his seeking an interview with the commandant forthwith—but first of all to Paul. How grateful and refreshing must the interview have been, especially when his sister manifested no interest in him at all. That was one of the bitter elements in the cup he was given to drink. Relatives more than dead to himself, but he, alive unto God. The ingenuous youth, with his intelligent and amiable countenance, appealed to everyone and, at Paul's instance, one of the captains took him to the commandant. Claudius Lysias,

equally favourably impressed, drew him aside kindly by the arm, and bade the youth to tell him everything. Again, we are struck by the readiness with which every statement is received. The Roman influence, even over subject races, was against lying. The Commandant made up his mind at once, and did not lose time to get confirmation of the rumour. He summoned a veritable army and took care that Paul was well horsed for his long night journey. Villages and towns were twinkling in new lights, when the tramp of horse and foot woke up the tired labourers, or midnight carousers lisped enquiries what it was all about? It was only a Jew on a horse who was turning the world upside down, and the Imperial Power was determined that he should not be balked!

The world would, indeed, be turned upside down if a Roman citizen should have not his rights. Claudius Lysias was determined that Paul should have a fair trial and his accusers should face him. At Antipatris, twenty miles from Cæsarea and forty from Jerusalem, the 400 foot soldiers marched back again—it is to be hoped, after taking a rest—although the record states that “the next day the infantry returned to the barracks.” Great tramping in this region 2,000 years ago. To-day there is not a living creature, sea-sand blows upon the cactus and the lizard. Antipatris and Cæsarea are nameless wastes. Meantime we see the 70 cavalry holding Paul in safety and the letter to the Governor will not miss delivery.

Cæsarea hoves in sight, Herod the Great’s great dream realised. Great in crimes and great in building feats, palaces, temples, and theatres flash in the sun, but the most gigantic feat was the semi-circular

mole, 200ft. broad, whose huge blocks of stone were let down twenty fathoms deep and could shelter a fleet.

Not alone the letter, Paul himself was brought before the Governor. "Where do you come from?"

"From Cilicia."

"I will hear all you have to say, when your accusers also have come." Felix doubtless spoke to his wife same day, about Paul's striking appearance in spite of a sleepless night. She was a Jewess, though in name only, and made him promise to let her see and hear him.

What a stir this man Paul was making. Ananias the High Priest must needs come down in five days with a number of elders and a pleader, Tertullus. Now this Felix has been given a very bad name. Tacitus, Josephus and Luke agree in condemning him. He was a slave favourite of Claudius, was given his freedom, promoted in the army, and in Judæa curried favour with the Jews, who besought of the Emperor to appoint him to the vacant Governorship. No sooner had he been seated than he discovered quite another character, and by his violence, injustice and rapacity made himself more hated than any previous Governor. His wife was no less abnoxious. She had been mated to the King of Emesa, who submitted to the rite of circumcision to win her. Yet, leaving her husband, she renounced Judaism to win Felix, who was a heathen! These two, fit subjects for the penetrating admonitions of the Apostle, were drawn by the strange attraction exercised upon the guilty by the holy, to seek interviews with Paul, as though his mere propinquity might do them good. There they sat, before the humble

weaver, and he cried out against them and spared not. Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, and Felix trembled, but Drusilla was past that. Felix had procured the assassination of Jonathan, the High Priest, because he had rebuked his administration. So he had good cause to tremble. He rose up in agitation and ended the interview : "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

"He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him, wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him."

I have antedated the foregoing interview to exhibit the character of the Governor, before whom Tertullus is to plead. You will notice the glozing flatteries of his prologue—in contrast with Paul's plain dealing—and the entire unsuitability of it to the individual addressed. The High Priest and the Elders must have winced under the satire. Tertullus now begins his accusation :

"Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness. Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldst hear us of thy clemency a few words. For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. Who also hath gone about to profane the temple : whom we took and would have judged according to our law. But the Chief Captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands."

“Commanding his accusers to come unto thee : by examining of whom thou mayest take knowledge of all those things whereof we accuse him.”

And the Jews also assented, saying that those things were so.

Then Paul, after that the Governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered : “Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself. Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship. And they neither found me in the Temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, nor in the Synagogue, nor in the city. Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. But I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things which were written in the Laws and the Prophets. And have hope toward God which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. And after many years I came to bring alms to my nation and offerings. Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the Temple, neither with multitude, nor tumult. Who ought to have been before thee, and object, if they had ought against me. Or else let these same say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the Council. Except it be for this one voice, that I cried, standing among them. Touching the resurrection of the dead, I am called in question by you this day.”

And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them and said, "When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter." And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister, or come unto him. And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife, Drusilla, who was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ—as formerly recounted. But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix's room, and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound (Acts xxiv., A.V.).

That Felix was not utterly bad is shown by the frequent interviews he sought with his prisoner, Paul. I cannot think that cupidity was his sole incentive. He was constrained to respect him and perhaps his very presence in custody in the palace suggested to his uneasy mind that he might act as a preservative against the vengeance of Heaven. The maladministration of the Province nevertheless went on, without reform, and the Jews again sent a deputation urging his deposition. It would have gone hard with him before Nero had not his brother Pallas, himself deposed from the Treasury, had yet sufficient influence to screen him. Exit Felix—Drusilla likewise—a good riddance. No! we did not entirely get rid of her. For she had a double, for her sister, the sister of Agrippa, who was presently to submit to the attraction of Paul, played a role, not dissimilar to that of Drusilla. Bernice, another splendid basilisk, had captivated another King, and for her sake, too, had been circumcised. Oh! this external rite was regarded the hall door to Heaven! Nevertheless,

like her sister, she could not be virtuous, and not long after was found living with her brother Agrippa. Both of them, some twelve years later, went in the train of the Conqueror Titus, who was so ensnared that she would have been an Empress had she not been a Jewess.

What moral curiosities came to gaze upon Paul, whose sole title was "The chief of sinners." Porcius Festus was neither famous, nor infamous, and found his province such a scene of disorders that his whole time and energy was consumed in attempting their suppression. Kitto says there were three currents of bloodshed and plunder in active operation. The superior and inferior priests were in arms against each other over the tithes, for those who had been High Priests continued to claim the dues of that office, and there were so many of them that the inferior priests could not live. It was a case of aldermen who had passed the chair wanting to enjoy mayor's salaries in perpetuity. It was time for Paul to turn the world upside down. They did such things in Judæa, Temp. 60 A.D.

The next Red Sea was due to the continued insurrections against the Roman Rule—the rebels turning their hands not alone against the authorities, but also against the Loyalists. The last sea of blood was set flowing by the numerous and powerful bands of robbers whom the Government could not extirpate, and who made the lives of the producers and also the merchants unbearable.

These things were the signs of the well-deserved end, the period of the Jewish State. A similar state of things is looming over Europe to-day. The end of the Christian Age is drawing to its close, and

will expire in blood and flame, inaugurating the universal liberty to do wrong.

But it is now time to have a look at Festus. In two years he will be off the stage, and he seems to know that his time is short. Landing at Cæsarea, he stays only two days, and hastes on to Jerusalem. And what was the first subject brought before him by the High Priest and the leading men, as of prime and urgent importance? Shepherds and sheep were slaughtered on the hill sides and the inferior priests were reduced to begging for rinds of bacon. Yet the great subject to occupy their great and holy minds was to get Paul murdered on his way from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. This single menace to the sacerdotal privilege made all other questions recede into insignificance. That was the national question. Just like the question of Disestablishment in Wales, or in England, equally removed from the questions that press upon the interests of the British Commonwealth. Festus, however, calmly replied that Paul was in custody at Cæsarea, and that he was himself going there very soon. "Therefore let those of you," he said, "who can come, go down with me, and impeach the man, if there is anything amiss in him." "After a stay of eight or ten days at Jerusalem—not more—he went down to Cæsarea, and the next day, taking his seat on the tribunal, he ordered Paul to be brought in. Upon Paul's arrival, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem, stood round him, and brought many grave charges against him, which they were unable to substantiate; while Paul, in reply, maintained, 'Neither against the Jewish Law, nor against the Temple, nor against Cæsar, have I committed any offence whatever.'"

Then Festus, being anxious to gratify the Jews, asked Paul, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem, and there stand your trial before me on these charges."

Paul's answer was: "I am standing before Cæsar's tribunal, where alone I ought to be tried. The Jews have no real ground of complaint against me, as, in fact, you yourself are beginning to see more clearly. If, however, I have done wrong and have committed any offence for which I deserve to die, I do not ask to be excused that penalty; but if there is no truth in what these men allege against me, no one has the right to give me up to them as a favour. I appeal to Cæsar."

Then, after conferring with the Council, Festus replied, "To Cæsar you have appealed, to Cæsar you shall go."

A short time after this, Agrippa the King and Bernice came to Cæsarea to pay a complimentary visit to Festus, and during their rather long stay, Festus laid Paul's case before the King. Agrippa, son of Herod Agrippa, justified heredity by turning out a capable Governor, and seems to have had less of the craft that distinguished his parent in his romantic career, but that he was a favourite at the Imperial Court, might not recommend him to popular favour when Nero and he appeared "birds of a feather." Roman duty, however, rose up and inspired the tenants of the throne to act more worthily than their native instincts would prompt. The office often makes the man. The traditions of the throne imparted its sanctities to inferior and less worthy passions. That is the value of conservative progress and the danger and loss of capricious changes in Government. The best comes out of a man when

great responsibilities are devolved. It was highly honourable to both Festus and Agrippa that they were alike anxious to deal scrupulous justice to any unconsidered Roman citizen, and hence "Festus laid Paul's case before the King." "There is a man here," he said, "whom Felix left a prisoner, about whom, when I went to Jerusalem, the High Priests and the elders of the Jews made representations to me, begging that sentence might be pronounced against him. My reply was that it is not the custom among the Romans to give up anyone for punishment before the accused has his accusers face to face, and has had an opportunity of defending himself against the charge which has been brought against him. When, therefore, a number of them came here, the next day I took my seat on the tribunal, without any loss of time, and ordered the man to be brought in. But when his accusers stood up, they did not charge him with the misdemeanours of which I had been suspecting him; but they quarrelled with him about certain matters connected with their own religion, and about one Jesus who had died, but—so Paul persistently maintained—is now alive. I was at a loss how to investigate such questions, and asked Paul whether he would care to go to Jerusalem and there stand his trial on these matters. But when Paul appealed to have his case kept for the Emperor's decision, I ordered him to be kept in prison until I could send him up to Cæsar."

"I should like to hear the man myself," said Agrippa.

"To-morrow," replied Festus, "you shall."

Accordingly, the next day, Agrippa and Bernice came in state and took their seats in the Judgment

Hall, attended by the tribunes and the men of high rank in the city ; and at the command of Festus, Paul was brought in. What an opportunity for a preacher of righteousness ! A rather undersized Jewish artizan, like a speck of grit, was staying the whole machinery of Government, and required the hand of Cæsar himself to remove it. The basilisk eyes of Bernice rayed down upon him ; history does not say what she thought of his nose, but she would be struck by his flashing eyes.

Then Festus said—(“ He has not many speeches to deliver before his ‘ tongue lies silent in the grave.’ Happy for him, though Nero’s executor, he is employing his short lease of life to afford every legal protection to a victim of national hatred and attempted destruction ”)—We listen to Festus as to his last words : “ King Agrippa and all who are present with us. You see here the man about whom the whole nation of the Jews made suit to me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying out that he ought not to live any longer. I could not discover that he had done anything for which he deserved to die, but as he has himself appealed to the Emperor, I have decided to send him to Rome. I have nothing very definite, however, to tell our Sovereign about him, so I have brought the man before you all, and especially before you, King Agrippa, so that after he has been examined I may find something which I can put into writing, For, when sending a prisoner to Rome, it seems to me to be absurd not to state the charges against him.”

Then Agrippa said to Paul, “ You have permission to speak about yourself.” So Paul, with outstretched arm, proceeded to make his defence.

“As regards all the accusations brought against me by the Jews,” said he, “I think myself fortunate, King Agrippa, in being about to defend myself to-day before you, who are so familiar with all the customs and speculations that prevail among the Jews, and for this reason, I pray you, give me a patient hearing.

“The kind of life I have lived from my youth upwards, as exemplified in my early days among my nation and at Jerusalem, is known to all the Jews. For they all know me of old—if they would but testify to the fact—how, being an adherent of the strictest sect of our religion, my life was that of a Pharisee.

“And now I stand here impeached because of my hope in the fulfilment of the promise made by God to our forefathers, the promise which our twelve tribes, worshipping day and night with intense devotedness, hope to have made good to them. It is on the subject of this hope, Sire! that I am accused by the Jews (Acts xxvi. 7, Weymouth). Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? (Acts xxvi. 8, A.V.). I myself, however, thought it a duty to do many things in hostility to the name of Jesus, the Nazarene. And that was how I acted in Jerusalem. Armed with authority received from the High Priest, I shut up many of God’s people in various prisons, and when they were about to be put to death I gave my vote against them. In all the synagogues also I punished them many a time, and tried to make them blaspheme, and in my wild fury I chased them even to strange cities. While thus engaged I was travelling one day to Damascus armed with authority and a commission from the High Priest, and on the journey

(Weymouth). At midday, O King, I saw in the way a light from Heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the ox-goad.' 'Who art Thou, Lord?' I asked. And He said, 'I am Jesus, whom Thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon your feet, for I have appeared to thee for this very purpose to appoint you My servant and my witness, both as to the things you have already seen and as to those in which I will appear to thee, delivering thee from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I send thee to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the obedience to Satan to God, in order to receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified through faith in Me. 'Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, but proceeded to preach first to the people of Damascus, and then to those at Jerusalem and in all Judæa and to the Gentiles, that they must repent and turn to God, and live lives consistent with such repentance. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having, however, obtained the help which is from God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say soon should come. That Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles.'

As Paul was thus making his defence, Festus exclaimed in a loud voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself ! much learning doth make thee mad."

But he said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the King knoweth of these things, before Whom I speak freely, for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from Him ; for they have not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the Prophets ? I know that thou believest."

Then Agrippa said unto Paul, "By these few words, thou wouldest persuade me to become a Christian."

Paul replied, "I would to God that by my words, whether briefly or at length, not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

So the king rose, and the governor, and Bernice, and those who were sitting with them and, having withdrawn, they talked to one another and said : "This man is doing nothing for which he deserves death or imprisonment."

And Agrippa said to Festus, "He might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Cæsar."

The august assembly was convened and now departs and all in reference to the arraignment of a perfectly insignificant Subject of the mighty Imperial Power. Because the majesty of the law had sheltered him. Out goes Agrippa II. from the Judgment Hall, with twenty times the years that lay before Festus ; saw the glory of the Temple just completed before it was overthrown, looks round for Bernice, who purposely delayed her steps, for the glory of her "pomp" was rivetting every eye. That splendid woman was not altogether bad. The ore of human nature is

seldom void of something golden, or resists for ever Heaven's alchemy. When the Jewish State was in its death throes, Bernice risked her life to succour her compatriots. When the Temple was no more, she went with her brother to Rome, and he died an aged Prætor. Festus, instead of despising his birthright, should have eagerly listened to a Resurrection as from an Angel, and counted it not the tale of a raving maniac. Poor, harassed mortal, he was committed for two years to a desperate struggle with the Hydra of disaffection, corruption and rebellion in every department of Church and State, and was presently to lie "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Exit Festus, with no particular blots upon his career.

And now it is time for Paul to depart, in custody of his guardians, whom he continues to magnetise and gets favours and concessions, simply because he discards "policy" upon the critical moments of his life and means to utter the truth, however unpalatable and ridiculous it may appear.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE VOYAGE ROMEWARDS.

PAUL is handed over to *Julius*, a captain of the Augustan battalion. This *Julius* is supposed, with high probability, to be the Julius Priscus, who was afterwards prefect of the Prætorian Guards under the Emperor Vitellius, the briber—the flash Emperor of ten months. Whoever he was, he acted like a gentleman, becoming influenced by his gentlemanly prisoner, the Apostle ; for Christianity it is which confers undisputed titles to nobility in all degrees. Julius got hold of a coasting vessel of Adramyttium, which traded with the ports south and west of Asia Minor, and was doubtless going back to her own port, not much below the Hellespont. He truly surmised that from Myra or Cnidus, he would find larger galleons, laden with Egyptian corn, for Rome, and could take advantage of the westerly current. The coaster of Adramyttium was too cramped for them—over two hundred and fifty of them, soldiers and prisoners—probably two hundred were soldiers. Luke was Paul's friend, a passenger. Aristarchus, a fellow-prisoner—under bonds for the Gospel—and other prisoners, whose names and crimes are undivulged. With them would be several other passengers. Merchants, with their several parcels of goods, landing and taking in cargo and stores, as she wore in and wore out of the ports on her accustomed beat. They were all glad to land at Sidon first, and stretch their legs. Sidon—very ancient port—which was the Bristol of those

days—manufacturers and merchant adventurers—while its rival, Tyre, was the Liverpool of this period. Sidon had its little Christian Church. The Sidonians were also great builders, but Paul's friends there were Temple builders of "living stones." "Here Julius treated Paul with thoughtful kindness and allowed him to visit his friends and profit by their generous care." (Acts xxvii. 3. Weymouth).

Now the coasting vessel had evidently cargo for Myra and passengers, and to make the shortest voyage, would take a straight course to the south of Cyprus, but the north-west wind was dead against her, so she had to beat up to the north of the island and then take advantage of the westerly current in the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, and finally arrive at *Myra*. It was a long wide angular trip. Familiar Cyprus almost constantly in view. One would like to know what were the results of Barnabas and Mark's missionary enterprise there. What is England doing now to Evangelize it? But Myra is our present business. She has disappeared. Her Theatre was 360 feet long. The arena of it is a cornfield—no loss. But when the old trader of Adramyttium was spied by the old gangs, who were waiting for her, and wondered at her slow voyage, the heavy cargo of human freightage were glad, indeed, to leave her decks and wished Julius success, as he went scouring the port to find roomier quarters. He succeeded as he expected. A big corn ship, bound for Rome, could take them all in and give them much ampler accommodation. Her complement, soldiers, passengers and crew was now 276. No time to hunt out disciples at Myra, the season was advancing and the contrary wind was blowing unpleasantly. They marched

almost from one ship to another. Faster a deal than the ship could sail, for the wind was contrary, in fact, dead against her, and she was also well down into the water. Paul who always knew what was going to take place, had his misgivings, though he knew that he must finally reach Rome. Many days elapsed and yet the old summits would plaguily remain before them, and not behind.

At length, with a blinding rain in their faces, Cnidus loomed on the plain and also on the cliffs—fresh water and salt running the same road on the deck. They had rounded Rhodes at the north and, a few days peace and rest would have been welcome, the mate, too, representing that they needed to add to their cordage. But delay was not to be thought of, and, since they could not take the straight course through the Ægean to Rhegium, the captain took the wind that offered, by which he could hope to go south to Cape Salmone and creep along under the shelter of Crete, and then, under the protection of Cape Matala, on the west of Fair Havens, they might think themselves secure for a season. The record says “near the town of Lasea.” No such town can be found, it may have been one of the hundred cities ancient historiographers credited the island with.

Whether the Fair Havens was deemed the port of Lasea, or not, it was not good enough to suit the mariners of the Alexandrian corn ship. They knew every inch of Crete, north and south, in their frequent voyages to Rome, and they knew that Fair Havens was not much of it, and that Phenice was better. Phenice, the modern Lutro, was made of a bold promontory, running south, and then making a crook to the east. In addition the harbour had two moles,

hence a better wintering place could not be found, sheltering both the north-west wind and the south-west.

“ Let us make for that ! ”

“ No ! ” said Paul. “ Give me leave to speak,” while the commander of the ship and the owner of the cargo were in earnest consultation. “ I perceive, sirs, that before long the voyage will be attended with danger and heavy loss, not only to the cargo and the ship, but to our own lives also.”

Julius listened with all respect to one whom all respected, but allowed himself at length to be persuaded by the pilot and the owner, rather than by Paul's arguments, and as the harbour was undoubtedly inconvenient and inferior to Phenice, the majority were in favour of putting out to sea, and making the attempt, meaning to stay the winter there. Every indecision was dissipated when a light breeze sprang up from the south. The mariners burst into a cheer and a song. Even the soldiers caught up the agreeable anticipation, and the prisoners were not behind, with the exception of one, whose settled conviction was that peril and loss was before them all.

However, up came the anchor and, afterwards, the sail, monstrous, lumbering thing, attached to the single mast, straining and levering the whole ship. Splendid ! we are running, flying along the coast and shall be soon in our winter house.

What's that ? By Jove, the wind has twisted round. It came with the chine force that drowned the Euridyce off the Isle of Wight. Yes ! the spirit of murder was in it. Down crashed the top hamper, round about Aristarchus' feet, but did not touch him. A new old wave with a hoary head looked over the side

and said, "How are you getting on?" They did not look very well. The sailors' song was over, the soldiers were glum and the shouts of the commanders could not be heard in the storm. Where was Paul?—with God. After that interview he was ready to bear a hand anywhere, if his chains would allow him. He suggested the prisoners should be unchained and assist the sailors. Soon he and Luke and Aristarchus were with the mariners clearing the deck, and stirring up the fellow passengers to throw overboard their vain images and look upward. The Christians did all they could to spread a spirit of calm confidence, but the owner of the cargo was going on with extravagant incantations and vows—he seemed to have the weight of the cargo upon his mind. All now took a new attitude towards Paul. Every word he uttered was regarded, and the sailors came to him for nautical directions.

"Look to the boat!" he said, and a number of them ran astern and saw she was foundering and would break away. The ship was by now quite driven out of her course and making for the island of Claudia. They could do nothing with it, but hoped when the island was reached, to run under a lee shore and make a better attempt. Happily they succeeded at last, and the boat was hoisted on board. Paul by that time had gone below, when a thundering crash came upon deck. It was the yard, and fell among the crowd of workers, yet none were either wounded or killed. Had it been otherwise, the same power that raised up Eutychus would have been exercised on behalf of the fallen.

Day succeeded day, the same hurricane wind, the same black heavens above, the same boiling sea.

Where are we? was the keen inquisition addressed

to every one of the crew. None could produce a single piece of valid information. The ship was, however, being blown westward, so far so good, Paul was convinced it would continue to blow in that direction. But foundering was the imminent danger. The timbers were leaking. Food stores were already spoiled. It was time to undergird the ship. Trapping-cables and ropes were commonly used for storm emergencies, and these equipments were disposed within and without the bulwarks. Promptly all hands were engaged upon the difficult and hazardous enterprise. The unloosing, the conveying, the disposing and clinching the grip of the cables round the hull of the large vessel must have been a labour of no common difficulty, under the circumstances of perpetual blinding storm and disconcerting wind. But partly water-logged as she was, the ship would not ride easily, and they dreaded also that the dreaded Syrtes would not give her draught enough. The sands of the Sahara were carpeting the floor of the South Mediterranean, for many miles of northern Africa, and the capricious eminences they raised and lowered could not be charted or known by Pilots.

If exhausted and despairing men, and almost foodless, too, were summoned to lighten the ship, the nature of the cargo was some encouragement to persevere, yet the chewed salt grain, taken with the bitter reflection that the danger of famine was being added to that of the sea, could not do much to hearten them. There was no thought just then of sacrificing the passengers' luggage, it was not considerable enough to offer any bait. At all events Paul would weight himself with his precious books and parchments, spotted here and there by prison oil at Cæsarea, and

with olive oil of the house of Aquila, at Corinth, and the Lecture Hall of Ephesus. In his girdle was his youthful essay, written in Arabia, when he compared and studied the developments of the Levitical economy and perceived how exquisitely congruous it was with the flower, the bud and the stem. Christ, Moses and Abraham. This, he felt, the waves would spare, and, at Rome, he should issue it as a last legacy to his dear brethren of the Covenant.

The leaks are increasing. All hands again to cast overboard the last of the ship's spare gear. "Where were they?" none could say. And when Paul was asked for an opinion, he was murmuring, "Melchizedek!" But raising himself, with his wonted courtesy, he acquainted his interlocuter that he had some comforting news to impart. "Gather upon deck, I am going to make known a message from Heaven."

Day after day had come with its tale of misery and disheartenment, but Roman stoicism and Roman obedience preserved among all ranks a dignified submission to the Powers above. They all looked upon St. Paul, that to have him among them was the one hopeful chance they possessed. So when on this eventful day, when for several days neither sun nor stars were seen and the terrific gale still harassed them and the last ray of hope was vanishing, the news was spread. "Paul has a message from Heaven, and will tell it to all, when they have first partaken of some food."

The morn was scarcely lighter than the night. The long persisting beclouded sky had never broke for weeks together, except to cheat half dead expectation. It was the sky of the casual labourer, under perpetual unemployment. But now, behold the altered faces!

“ Paul has a message from Heaven to tell us.” The owner of the cargo was dragged, only half alive, to hear it. They were gathered below, and above, every now and again, the wash and swirl of breaking waves pounded overhead.

“ Sirs, you ought to have listened to me and not have sailed from Crete, you would then have escaped this suffering and loss. But now take courage, for there will be no loss of life among you, but of the ship only. For there stood by my side, last night, an Angel of God, to whom I belong, and Whom I serve, and he said, ‘ Fear, not, Paul, thou must be brought before Cæsar ; and God has granted you the lives of all who are sailing with you.’ Wherefore, Sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.” Acts xxvii., 21-26.

The vessel had been hove to an angle with the direction of the wind, her starboard side exposed to the gale and the two great eyes, painted on the prow, looking to the north. Thus she was slowly drifting, certainly not away from Rome, but so slowly that her speed was not greater than 36 miles in every 24 hours. Leaving the first day of the fortnight’s hurricane for the work of being blown to Clauda and then laying to and heaving up the boat, the thirteen following days, exactly, brought the ship into Paul’s Bay at Malta, in the Mediterranean, under a north-easter, and not to any Melida in the Adriatic before a south-wester—as was vainly argued by Falconer and unwisely espoused by Coleridge. The distance between Clauda and Malta is less than 480 miles. The distance accomplished by the ship, under the unabated pressure of the wind, would be 468 miles, a striking confirmation

indeed! "Adria," it must be remembered, was given a designation far wider and further south than the Gulf.

This was the fourteenth day of darkness and impending death. The "Fast," the great Fast of Expiation, had been celebrated at the close of September. October had come with a handful of gales and now cold rains were persisting even unto November. No relief—but the seamen on the look-out could discern an alteration in the voices of the waves. They said to one another, "Land is ahead." After such a long spell of wretchedness and hope deferred, most of the souls on board were now indifferent as to their fate. Peace and rest could at all events be found at the bottom. With languid attention they heard that something was ahead of them, but in the black darkness could not tell what. Louder came the peculiar wash of the waves breaking on a rocky shore.

"Heave the lead."

"Right! It is twenty fathoms."

"Heave again."

"Fifteen fathoms."

"We are lost."

"No! You know what the Jewish prisoner said, that not a hair of our heads would be lost. Notwithstanding we should be stranded on a certain island."

Then plucking up a little heart, for fear of possibly running on rocks, they threw four anchors from the stern and waited for the day. The new-day was showing its old face—a sickening repetition of blue, black, scudding clouds, mixed on the under side with a streak of sulphur—and the sickening of eternally bellowing wind. Life was not worth living, and yet some foolish and traitorous sailors were wanting to preserve it,

unknown to the rest. They were going ostensibly to lay out two more anchors at the bow, and Paul was apprised of it. He went up to Julius, and told him the seamen must not leave. Julius acted at once. Paul was the commander, and the soldiers were bidden to cut the ropes and the boat was let fall off.

Now—this new danger avoided—Paul began to animate the sunken souls under his pastoral care. This is the fourteenth day, he urged, anxiously waiting for the storm to cease and you have been fasting from food and sleep, taking little per force of neither. Naturally, you look ill and weak. You must take a good hearty meal, for this is essential for your safety. Remember, I have told you, not a hair will perish from the head of any one of you. Having said this, he took some bread and, after giving thanks to God for it, before them all, he broke it in pieces and began to eat. This raised the spirits of all. There were 276 of them, crew and passengers all told, and, after a hearty meal, they lightened the ship by throwing the remainder of the wheat overboard.

“The yellow sickly dawn now began to spread and all tried in vain to recognise the coast, but an inlet with a sandy beach attracted their attention, and now their object was, if possible, to run the ship aground there. So they cut away the anchors and left them in the sea, unloosing at the same time the bands which secured the paddle-rudders. Then hoisting the fore-sail to the wind, they made for the beach. But coming to a place where two seas met, they stranded the ship, and her bow sticking fast, remained immovable, while the stern began to go to pieces under the heavy hammering of the sea.” (Acts xxvii. 41. Weymouth.)

And the soldiers, being responsible for the prisoners, a life for a life, gave counsel to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out and escape. But the Centurion, desirous to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea and get to land, and the rest should follow as best they could by help of such ship furniture and wreckage as was within reach—and the beach was soon crowded to help, not alone by the drenched saved ones, but also by many of the natives, shouting out directions in a tongue no one knew, and hence dubbed Barbarians, but they discovered genuine humanity and in later years put to shame those reputed Christian and civilized.

Behold then the sea dotted by human heads, now under, now above, while each within sight of the strand; and yet life itself held at the seeming blind capricious action of the toiling sea. Paul and Aristarchus and Luke likewise, all struggling within five minutes of eternity, and each and all predestined to be saved. Aristarchus, Paul's convert and fellow-prisoner, silent and faithful man, does nothing of himself to mark the page of history, only marks his cross. During the voyage he was not singled out for favour, as Paul invariably was, but nevertheless, the Lord is grasping now the arms of Aristarchus, on the sore place where the chains grated, and He is lifting up the head of his servant. The same Divine Rescuer is supporting Luke—who will not say a word about himself, but holds out help to another prisoner. As for Paul, the waves know him of old. Three shipwrecks and a day and a night passed upon the deep, made him no stranger. You must know that the sea is one and yet divisible. The Eternal spoke to the sea before his

former shipwrecks and it kept His commandments. So now the individual waves of the Great One and All came racing one upon another to greet their old companion. Rather exceeded in effusiveness, like romping grandchildren overpowering their relative in the Christmas Hall. The waves kept dancing about Paul. "We are to serve you," they said, "not to destroy. But you have new scars since we saw you. You have been wearing chains, how is that? We are given in charge to help you, wherever you may be. Don't mind that black fellow behind. He is a Judas among the disciples." Paul looks round and sees the reeling, staggering, drunken wave laden with a false salutation, drenching him high overhead, but the other waves tripped Judas up and he rose no more, while the Apostle felt his feet upon the rock, and he was reaching out and helping up others to his own safe standing place. There was a head in the offing, left alone. Although the head seemed able to take care of itself, Paul was anxious about this laggard. Luke was offering, when a pagan youth of the island, jabbering what none could understand, anticipated any one else and plunged into the surf. The head was now getting nearer, and soon all recognised with a smile, Julius, the gentleman, the last to leave the ship, who had been searching for something that Paul valued and had missed. He bore it triumphantly to his prisoner. It was the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The sea of Adria had so well baptized the shipwrecked, that it was indeed a difficult thing to gather dry sticks. It was practical piety that led idolaters to keep perpetually burning a sacred fire. The fire that was now being started under very discouraging circumstances, was borrowed, perhaps, from some

idol fire. It was worth the shipwreck to meet with such genuine kindness at the hands of the little spot which had its Roman Governor and was canopied by the Empire. It was common for isolated islands, even calling themselves Christian, to indulge in making spoil from unfortunate seafarers who had been wrecked. The Maltese, though strangers to the Prophets or Apostles, had not been left without the principles of natural religion, and they registered themselves as candidates for the Kingdom. "The barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain and because of the cold." And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat and fastened on his hand. The natives saw the creature hanging to his hand, and said among themselves, 'No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live.' And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said he was a god." (Acts xxviii. 2-6. A.V.)

Significant instances of the universal conscience within the *genus homo*, and it is the pen of a physician who records it. Observing and noting, though in drenching garments, and the smoke is driven in gusts into his face, the ship doctor is watching Paul and the natives who are being much exercised in their mind.

What a gulf is revealed by the untutored man between him who is so driven to speak of "unerring

justice ” and the nearest beast whose bodily envelope is most comparable to his ! the supple ape and the immature child of God, anchored to stable moral law. What an appeal for missionary effort the world round ! The inquisitive natives were not wrong in their conclusion. Paul was endowed with gifts enabling him to be a delegate of the Divine.

“ Now, in the same part of the island there were estates belonging to the governor, whose name was Publius. He welcomed us to his house, and for three days generously made us his guests. It happened, however, that his father was lying ill of dysentery, aggravated by attacks of fever. So Paul went to see him, and after praying, laid his hands on him and cured him. “ By suggestion ” (a member of the last Church Congress opined), and “ the Lord’s miracles were done in like manner.” But what follows ? “ After this, all the other sick people in the island came and were cured.” (Acts xxviii. 7—9. Weymouth.) Were *all* the patients equally susceptible to suggestion, and were not the diseases diverse ? It was because the natives recognised they had a Divine man amongst them that “ they honoured us with many honours : and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary.” (Acts xxviii. 10. A.V.) 276 persons. Gratitude indeed !

What long spells of intervals between clamorous calls for incessant activities the Apostle was favoured with in the fine leisurely days of old ! The lengthy stays at Antioch, the eighteen months at Corinth, the two or three years at Ephesus, best of all the two years imprisonment in Cæsarea and another similar privilege ahead, in Rome. These were the grand opportunities of the Epistles. Prison walls were not a cage to the

Apostle. They gave a "liberty" such as in our strenuous days we sigh for in vain.

Look at this pampered Paul, rolling in the lap of luxury, by having to wait for no less than three months before he can get on. He can actually see the sea, and harken to the mute voices of nature. Busy enough, indeed, with the delightful tasks of healing the sick, giving Luke a complete furlough, and pouring into the ears of the sufferers the wine and oil of the Gospel, but bye and bye there was not a patient left !

To pour into the ears of the sufferers, the wine and oil of the Gospel could not be administered but inadequately, for the strange speech of the common people was unknown to the Christians. But one lingo they had in full possession—the language of love, and their hands coming to the rescue of their tongues, and by significant signs pointing to "the blue Heavens above them bent," the unconsidered natives began their education in the Creed that "God is Love." Full, then, of bodily health, but sadly wanting in a complete knowledge of Divine truth, the natives were left under God's tutelage.

The miraculous gift of tongues and dialects recognised by the foreign visitors at Pentecost, began and ended there and then. "Tongues," imparted with other gifts, through Apostolic hands, were not the same, and needed to be interpreted. They were "signs" for the Church, not media for the world. Clearly, the ordained diversity of languages and races were established for the training and perfecting of the Ecclesia, and accomplishments in linguistic faculty are by no means indispensable in missionary operations. The salvation of the world is not the true objective, but the obedience of the Church. God has

long since put His hand to the work of universal salvation, and His decrees cannot fail. But the judgment of the Church, *that* is what has to be apprehended. But here comes Aristarchus, silent, faithful man, chained to the soldier that keeps him. And with him Lucas.

“What are you doing, dear Paul, sitting on that rock, and gazing into the sea?”

With his divinely happy smile, Paul turns and replies, “I was listening to the waves.”

“And what did they say?”

“They were repeating what I wrote to the Romans from Corinth, ‘Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began. But now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the Prophets, according to the Commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever, amen.’ (Romans xvi. 25—27. A.V.)

“The sea caught the ascription and its waves go rolling round the world, chanting it upon every coast. Hark!”

Paul had risen and Aristarchus and the soldier and Luke were staring at him. “I have spoken to the Sea,” continued Paul, “and the Sea is faithful. I have also given a message to the Air and it will not fail.”

“Tell us!” they said.

Then, raising his voice, and with uplifted arms, the breezes kneeling down to hear it again, he quoted from his letter to the Galatians, his motto for the Churches, which is also his cheer to the world, “Finally, brethren

farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace and the God of love and peace shall be with you." (Gal. xiii. 11. A.V.)

"Waft! waft! ye winds the story,

"And you ye waters roll."

Then, after a silence, they heard a bugle call. Luke began to speak: "What stories are wrapt up in the breasts of those 200 soldiers! One of them gave me some snatches of his private history. It was quite a romance. If we could only get a score of them and interrogate them one by one, there would be enough to occupy you, Paul, to last your life, in the way of applying truth, and illustrating it."

"Preach to them, Luke! and you, Aristarchus," said Paul, and, if you are in a difficulty with gainsayers, ask me, and I am ready. But you know I have all the care of the Churches and the interests of my children are always engrossing my thoughts. I need much prayers for them and for myself. I have been to the crew of 'Castor and Pollux.' I shall take the sailors, and do you keep to the soldiers."

Three long months, quite a holiday, in those old days of leisure. Paul went marching about, with the song of the sea and of the winds humming in his ears—and meditating great things for Rome. Only one circumstance troubled him—the veneration paid him by the natives. Mindful of the wonderful miracles of healing he had performed, the poor slaves and freedmen persisted in dipping their foreheads in the dust whenever he passed. He would take them courteously by the hand, and point upwards to the sky. He had neither women nor children to bother about, nor telegram, telephones nor wireless demanding instant attention, and Publius had frequent invitations.

Three months and no newspapers ! Could life be really supported ?—without wires ? What was Rome doing ? What new High Priest was dipping his hand into the treasury at Jerusalem ? These questions had to wait, and Rhegium would furnish gossip or rumour. Rumours quite as reliable as wires, for newspapers must live, and to-day's news begets to-morrow's contradictions. But now Malta had to bestir itself, for Paul and his convoy were compelled to move on. The supercargo of the " Castor and Pollux " was anxious to get into the top price of the market. A winsome south-easter began to blow. It was like the kiss of the prince in the fairy tale. Malta awoke and all was alive. The *Chant du Depart* was flung upon the breeze and now everything was animation.

The soldiers, over the barrier of language, got quite friendly with the natives, and both disclosed as many endowments, peculiarities and deficiencies, as the tints and forms of the pebbles on the strand. The little cultivators despoiled their little patches to make offerings to their benefactors, of whom Paul was *facile princeps*. He was the marvellous healer, and much he deplored that he could not impart to them the glorious Gospel as well. They brought small sweet oranges and bags of wine, and those who had been lame brought their crutches, as mementoes of their cure. In an unguarded moment Paul, being a gentleman, accepted the crutches, and then, by an embarrassing impulse, other cured cripples ran back to their hovels and brought theirs out to add to his treasures. Pathetic was it to see little boys and girls running for their crutches, for which they had now no further use. Paul piled them in a corner, and wondered what he should do with them. The art of navigation at that

age did not require steam. He was compelled to regard them as negligible quantities.

Barbarous people, indeed ! Castor and Pollux was under weigh. She was standing out to sea, and all the passengers crowding together to one side gave her quite a list. One young woman was running down the beach and getting into a shallop, and was paddling furiously. She was assisted to the side and handed up a little image—for Paul. She opened her arms, rejected by a gesture and pointed upwards.

That was the last. The black bulky crowd, composed of souls, grew thinner and fainter, and became a mere smear upon the glistening beach. Another chapter of human history was closed, and, amid the rattling of the shrouds, Paul heard the hymns of the Waves and the Wind.

Everything in connection with the weather now became as favourable as formerly it was contrary. Syracuse was reached in half-a-day and the discharge of cargo was hurried, but it occupied three days. After Malta it seemed ungrateful to take much interest in this once famous city, where Nicias played so tragic a part, and Athenian ambition was so fatally rebuked.

We are not told that Julius permitted Paul to land. Syracuse stood for calamity, Paul was in command of an expedition, which meant the conquest of the world. The wind obliged tacking at first and then continued to blow the Apostle forward. Rhegium came next. Busy place, opposite Messina, our Messina, and where mariners were frequently in jeopardy between Scylla and Charybdis. And the twin gods, Castor and Pollux, approximately patronised the larger port. The ship was now going splendidly, the cargo was put out with the greatest expedition, there

was money in the wind. The south wind was behind the great sail and an immense portion of the journey was accomplished in a single day. The smiling supercargo smilingly smacked Paul on the back, "How goes it?"

Paul's thoughts were far away from earthly gain. His eyes seemed rivetted upon the long lovely length of blue Salerno, but his mind was with his Church at Ephesus, and he was meditating to write to it. So when the supercargo's rough but kindly salutation shook him, he simply replied, not altering his attitude, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ. (Ephesians iii. 8. A.V.)

"Riches! Riches! Yes! you're right. We have done near 200 miles, and we shall be the first of the fleet of the grain ships."

Paul was not interested, but replied, "I, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called."

"Who is he?" said the supercargo to Julius, and they talked long together under their breath. At the end of which the merchant turned and looked at Paul with new eyes and, moreover they became shaded, and as he paced now slowly on the deck, he murmured to himself, "Ah! if my invalid daughter were here, the prisoner of the Lord, laying his hands upon her, would set her free."

Look, Paul, at gem-like Caprea! Look also at the vine clad slopes of Vesuvius, the Mount of Judgment, that slumbered not and will bury Drusilla. The ship winds towards Puteoli. At once a great hot hydro-path, with aristocratic Baia looking down upon its

commercial neighbour. They were the Bristol and the Bath of ancient times.

Ere they landed, the scene must have been one of the greatest animation. Fishermen, trading ships and numerous yachts of the luxurious aristocrats dotted the expanse of the then tranquil waters. Looking down the bases of the seventeen piers of the mole, where the lighthouse stood, one could see the fish playing with the sea weed and catching the scum that was overthrown from the merchantmen there moored. But it was the components of the crowd upon the mole that arrested Paul; Jews, by their dress and faces; and many of them unexpectedly he discovered to be Christians. How cheered was the Apostle's heart! He was very susceptible of attractions and repulsions. Before they spoke; from the tender brightness of their eyes, he made up to them and found that he was right.

"How long can you stay? We earnestly desired to see the author of the Epistle to the Romans. But to come in chains!"

Paul repeated what he had written. "Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Rom. viii. 35—37. A.V.) "Is Phœbe here? Are Aquila and Priscilla at Rome?" a multitude of other questions.

"You must get permission to stay and we will tell you all we know."

Julius had his marching orders, but true to his courteous spirit, he considered how he could comply with the demands of imperial duty and, at the same time,

gratify Paul and his friends. He succumbed, and awarded a seven days' stay. And while the Recording Angel was beginning to write his name in the Book of Life, they were all together with great joy, knotted upon the mole, concerting plans for a meeting for worship and a breaking of bread.

The Imperial Post took messages to Rome that day, and it was suggested that delegates from each Church should meet at Appii Forum. In the midst of the group, heads bent together, the supercargo broke into the circle to address Paul. He asked prayer on behalf of his sick daughter at Alexandria, same time thrusting some handsome coins—a funny mixture. Coins of Syracuse and Rhegium, *cum multi allis*, into Paul's hands.

"For your daughter, yes! but for me, no," said the Apostle.

Then the merchant pressed him, and Paul said, "I will take it for the poor at Jerusalem."

The supercargo replied in Greek, the translation of which in English meant, "Right you are!" and vanished, not into space, but to a very crowded market.

It was a blessed season—hearts were refreshed, and understandings were informed and opened, and the gathering was augmented by several recruits. Ere the march commenced upon the Campanian Way leading to Capua and the Appian Way, Paul gave his farewell in almost the words of his Epistle. "I am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some

sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God" (Romans xv. 14—15, A.V.).

Busy roads! Senators, invalids, gay youths, palanquins and family coaches thronged the way, sumpter mules and oxen heavily laden. By-and-bye the traffic became thinner and on the left the heavy pine woods, often infested by banditti, disclosed blue openings, framed in blackest shade. Tombs, with grateful mention of slaves by masters (domestic slavery, not prædial, had many redeeming features, Epictetus to wit). Tombs that were to be subsequently rifled, while beneath the soil were stores of Etruscan vases; evidently Capua was a Stoke-upon-Trent, with a difference—when unearthed; they made Wedgwood and Flaxman busy in England. Bright, broad and rapid, Volturno sweeps round the ancient walls of Capua, once a rival to Rome in size and splendour. Tramp! Tramp! Where is Aristarchus and where is the Doctor? As usual we cannot find them. They are so modest. Julius and Paul are walking together. "Oh! there they are!" Luke is ministering to a soldier who is lame, while Aristarchus seems—in Heaven. Look, Aristarchus! over the parapets of the bridge. There is Heaven below as well as above. Tramp! Tramp! The willows are beginning to smile in green, but snows linger in the higher hills.

At length the concourse came upon a region which was the despair of engineers, ancient and modern, the Pomptine Marshes. Once a sea gulf, then clogged with allivium, making lagoons between low parallel downs. Successive schemes were attempted to drain it, and as often ultimately abandoned,

and when Rome was no more the mistress of the world, the road of Appius Claudius became submerged, and only when Popes succeeded Cæsars did modern engineers resume the task. Perhaps some Kensitite might cherish the faith that Popes never did any good in the world, nevertheless it is historical that it was a Pius who in 1777 saw the piers, arches and bridges of Appius Claudius begin to peep above the miasmatic sea. For nearly sixteen years he prosecuted that most laudable undertaking, rescuing thousands of acres of the most fertile soil in the world, "peopled" with cattle and crops, but unpeopled of men. And accomplished it with such economy that the seven to eight thousand men employed could not have been paid more than 6d. per day—cheaper, perhaps, than Roman slavery. It only cost the Papal Treasury £360,000, but what cost in human lives through early graves by malaria! Let us pay our tribute to the labourers who did it, rather than to the Pope who simply ordered it. But here is Appii Forum and the southern end of the canal which gave Horace some amusement. Julius had the option of barging his convoy for 14 miles. We cannot say what he did; no doubt he gave facilities before the next start was made for the Christians from Rome to exchange greetings with those of Puteoli, and to rejoice together for having the celebrated author of the Epistle to the Romans among them. It was an engrossing subject, the wondrous, the marvellous, the unheard of thing, the extension of God's free favour and rich bounty o'erleaping the boundaries of descent from Abraham, and recognising the uncircumcised as heirs! It was turning the world upside down. And the miracle of Love and Renunciation was done by a

Jew Himself ! He did not think it was a thing to be grasped at to be a Son of Abraham, but to be the Son of Man ! The stupendous Revelation seduced and drowned the newly enlightened in glorious contemplations, and interspersed with the objects of faith were solicitous enquiries about the dear Christians whom Paul was hoping to meet. Where was Mary ? Could she not come ? Epenetus, is he still holding on ? What about Amplius, Urbane and Stachys ? I need not ask about Andronicus and Junia. I heard that their fidelity has brought them to be imprisoned again. Ah ! here is beloved Persis, "which laboured much in the Lord." "Come along, brother." Persis and Paul are locked together. It made the way so light. Then there were enquiries from the Church at Rome, after beloved Timotheus and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater. Tell us about Tertius, and Gaius and Erastus. And who is *Quartus*. We don't know him. Paul said he is "a brother." But now the roads that all lead to Rome became so crowded that at the Three Taverns intimate conversation had to be suspended. It afforded, however, opportunity for Aristarchus to be drawn out of his shell. Paul brought Persis to him, and left them together.

Everybody was searching for Luke, but the mystery was cleared up when it became known that several soldiers had to fall out of the ranks, and in a waggon Luke was busy with his medicine chest. None of the walkers, although talkers, felt any weariness. And, to add to the happiness of the hour, another contingent had come from Rome to greet the Asiatic Church. Then was Paul overjoyed. "When he saw the Brethren, he thanked God and took courage."

Volscian Hills on the right, behind them northwards the Sabine Mountains. But immediately before them the southern spur of the Alban Hills. The cavalcade began to climb as the Appian Way ascended. Then it descended until Aricia stood upon the second slope. The beggars of Rome had made Aricia a chief colony, for Pagans recognised that tolls to the needy were commendable. But strange ! no altar, no temple, no statue to charity ! Did each individual " idolater " know that he carried all three in his own breast ? Another small climb and from the summit Rome sprawled upon the Campagna, and Paul arrested his steps. Many stopped with him. The great centre of the Empire was extending its tentacles until they almost embraced the villas of the wealthy on the slopes. But it was no Tarrantula, no Octopus, entirely. Although its representatives were given to legal plunder of the provincials, they established a reverence for Law, and the roads that met at the Forum and radiated thence to the known world, were not merely an immense iron web, in which to catch and bleed strange tribes : it was a complex girder which bonded together families of nations, where everywhere ostensibly, if not really, the Roman official sprinkled incense upon the Altar of Justice.

Marked and significant was the absence of lofty erections breaking the general flat level of the many storied lodging houses. The Pantheon with its cupola was not considerable, and its one blue eye, open to the sky and set in the centre of its head, was not surmounted by any campanilla.

It was Christianity that taught architecture to aspire. To tower above inferior things. To soar towards the illimitable spaces and above the mists

and vapours to which impurity imparted odours. Above all the Gothic spire, springing from the basal cross, gave its unmistakable proclamation that the spirit of the cross had beautified man's present dwelling places and pointed him to the "building not made with hands."

The road was getting more crowded, posts and prætors, legionaries on the march, processions to and from the temples. Funerals to the vaults of noted families, which tombs had no hopeful hieroglyphic, like the fish* figured upon those of the Christians in the Catacombs. Horsemen, tradesmen, carriers, palanquins, coaches, labourers, slaves and scented Exquisites. Drove of oxen and sheep, and the varieties of costume indicated the many nations to which Rome was subject, and with which she traded. Now, come at length to Rome, the company had to pass under the Porta Capina, over which was an Aqueduct, and its constant dripping baptized the passengers indiscriminately, or rightly had need to weep over most of them.

On they went between the mounds styled "hills," of the Aventine on the left and the Palatine on the right, winding round the latter and ultimately descending to the sacred *Forum*. Overlooking it on the Capitoline was Cæsar's house, the palace, attached to which was the barrack of the Pratorian guard, of whom Burrus was Prefect. To this official, whose duty it was to keep in custody all accused persons who were to be tried before the Emperor, Julius handed over Paul. Rome thus and then receiving its greatest conqueror—the conqueror of the modern world. The capital becoming the greatest Jewel Case, containing

* Ιχθύς (fish) Ἰησοῦς Χριστός Θεοῦ Υἱός Σωτήρ.

Jesus Christ God's Son, Saviour.

a gem which was to sparkle and glitter for two years in captivity.

Paul, although chained to a soldier that kept him, was permitted by special favour to receive his friends at his own hired house. A domicile large enough to accommodate gatherings of the Christians and to hold discussions with the unconverted Jews. This was a service to the great cause of immense value—not alone to the enquirers, but also to Paul himself. It is supposed that when he was liberated after his trial before Nero (and the tyrant had at that time shown no disposition to shirk the responsibility of his position ; for he had insisted that each charge should be dealt with separately and not merged into one general accusation). Nero, we say, was not speeding down the path which ultimately made for himself a name at which the world grew pale. He had acquitted the Apostle and without any recording companion, Paul resumed his missionary enterprises. The personal subjection to a soldier was, indeed, a bitter feature in his bondage, but are we to suppose that all his military hostages were of a coarse and brutal type ? It is not to be imagined that to be linked to the greatest of the Apostles had no refining and exalting influence. It may be deemed certain that several of the troopers became Christians and, that in the prætorian barrack Christian hymns were frequently raised and Christ Himself chained Himself to the soldiers who upheld the standard of the Cross and were ready to war and die for their Lord's Kingdom.

It was thus nurtured by constant disputations with the factious Jews and being given long periods for meditation, prayer and study, the Apostle rose to the highest flights of inspired exposition of the Gospel

that had been committed to him. In the course of the first year of his imprisonment at Rome, he wrote two Epistles, allied in treatment, which stand at the summit of his Christian revelations, that to the Ephesians and that to the Colossians. At the close of the year he wrote to the Philippians, likewise the precious letter to Philemon.

The first year of his freedom he hies away again to his beloved Macedonia and Asia Minor. Then he is lost to us, so far as Epistles can trace him, for some three years. Did he carry out his project to visit Spain ?

It seems to me he most likely did. No man to whom has been given a Divine commission can lightly disregard intimations and impulses towards future activities in definite places without keeping in view and arranging for their realization. I don't think Paul's intention was balked. It is pleasing to imagine that the seed that was sown by Paul's labours in Spain are predestined to attain to a harvest, larger and better than under Papal supremacy has yet been achieved. Pauline theology is being revived in the Peninsula. It is supposed that the Apostle spent no less than two years there.

A thrilling second volume of the Acts awaits discovery. It is not impossible that in the dispossessing of the vast number of monastic libraries in Spain and Portugal some manuscript may turn up which may repay our sacred curiosity and add a weapon to the armoury for Christian defence. Paul would return from Spain feebler in body, and meantime the master of the Roman world was getting worse. The pending shadow of his approaching martyrdom was upon him. From Macedonia he writes to Timothy and from Ephesus to Titus. Then winter at Nicopolis.

These previous five years are largely suppositions. And how and why Paul was sent again to Rome no valid document asserts. It is generally agreed that in the spring of 68, A.D., Paul was, for the second time, in prison at Rome, and from thence he wrote his second Epistle to Timothy. In the same year, mid-summer, the aged Apostle bent his head in adoration for all the grace and favour the Lord of Life had given him and Nero's axe silenced the Apostle's voice for ever. The tyrant himself was to be hurried to the shades below, while the martyr was basking in the Light of his Lord's joy.

Let none suppose that the unrecorded years that elapsed after Luke's pen was stayed are not even now operative in inspiring the Christian Church. We know now how to reproduce casual speech and song, and how the most incidental action can be recorded for all time. Are not the arial envelopes of the world endowed with qualities enabling them to register all words and all scenes? Cannot the Æther and the Atmosphere together act as great films which hold the Registers of all lives and their acting situations? And not influence alone either eye or ear, or both; but enter the brain and soul and unconsciously give us repetitions of Paul's revelations and cause to be reproduced in other climes and times and by other agents, the successes, the fervours, the Divine unfoldings of the Great Evangel, of which no Luke has given us the record. It is my faith that the last five years of St. Paul, of which we have no published accounts, are not lost in the invisible Library of the world's gaseous girdle. A highland minister in the lonely manse of a lonely island in Northern Seas, unconsciously receives spiritual enlightenment and

impulse from some glorious proclamation of the Gospel uttered in A.D. 65 under the sunny skies of Spain. Paul's body—we know not where it lies, but his soul lives on for ever and for ever, and all he said and did, and all his prayers and all that the Holy Spirit moved him to declare, is an imperishable treasure to the world and to the Church, though not preserved by any parchments or by books. The same is true of all individual lives, bad and good. The planet's raiment is clean or soiled, is sweetened or made melodious by every generation, according to its moral manifestation. The old world swings round upon its orbit, with baleful or blessed pulsations beating within its inconspicuous vibrations. To-day the heathen nations are owing to its sway. The Christian Ages have been storing energy and without Pioneer Missionary. Natives in Korea, China, India and Africa are moved to listen to the strange whisperings to their souls coming as from the viewless air, disposing them to listen to, and to accord a welcome to, the messages of God's love in Christ.

In very truth the Judgment Books of the World are bound around its body. It is as easy to open the Judgment Books as to flash a living scene upon the sheet of a cinematograph theatre. All indictments, and all acquittals, are within them. And all the destinies of all men are already prepared to be pronounced and unerringly fulfilled. "No man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself." Our passing Day of Life is charged with influence upon all future generations. God be thanked that the House of Humanity can be upheld by the weakest of His children, God be prayed that within its atmosphere no hurtful utterance of ours may lower its healthfulness.

Amid the great Auditorium of the World, where the voices of men re-echo for ever ; and Angels and Archangels contend with the Devil for the mastery of the fainting Body of Humanity : Let him who sides with God speak for Paul with bated breath and ardent admiration. Rally his own waning spirit and those of the true Paulicians of to-day : until HE shall come in the air, with all His saints, before Whom the hosts of Hell will flee and HUMANITY will stand erect again, radiant and glad, to breathe the fresh air of God's new Kingdom, at the Dawn of the Ages to come.

FINIS.

THE NEW LIFE OF ST. PAUL

APPENDIX (A).

ON MIRACLES.

MIRACLES are not antecedently improbable. The common objection against them is that natural laws are the expression of God's Will and that Will is fixed and unalterable during the term of the existence of the Universe.

Here are two grand assumptions, having no foundation: (a) That God's Will, once declared, is unchangeable; (b) That any alteration of God's Will in regard to matter or spirit, in any portion of the whole creation, would endanger, if not destroy the Cosmos.

Is that capable of proof? And is it irrational to suppose that God's Will is so impressed upon matter and spirit that in the action of normal law there is a degree of elasticity, admitting of suspensions of normal action and admitting even of contradictions, without entailing evil consequences to the integrity and the phenomenal continuity of the general order?

Why are these two grand assumptions to go unchallenged? Omnipotence alone could aver that it is irrational to question them.

And for this reason principally, that the *Will* of the Creator must be related to man's will. Man's will is free, and Man is a creator, subordinately. And although in regard to matter, his creations are only effected by ascertaining the laws of matter and using that knowledge to bring into being what phenomenally never previously occurred, yet he is a creator and can achieve ends by more than one means.

Is it rational to suppose that the Great Original is less capable of manifesting an altered will or choice than mortal man—his puny imitator?

Again, if man's will is confined by the laws imposed by the Creator at the beginning, man is not only *free* to ask Him to work in opposition to them, but even *invites* his creatures to do so.

If we are enjoined to pray, and for things which demand an interference with natural law, then the whole question is won for miracles. Does God tell us to expect answers to prayer; as Jesus did, before He bade Lazarus arise from the dead? Was His prayer answered or not? Are we not enjoined to imitate Jesus in the matter of our prayers and to expect the same answers? Did not the Apostles imitate Jesus as in the parallel case of Lazarus? And did not Peter and Paul receive the Jesus' answer?

The whole reply to the foregoing is that no historical testimony is to be relied upon which relates miracles. If that be so, then the whole foundations of our Lord's words and deeds, the things by

* Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me. And I knew that Thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent me. And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, Come forth. And he that was dead came forth.—(John ii., 41-44).

which His nature and character can be discovered and all His declarations perish along with the recorded miracles. We are left without even warrant for His actual appearance, as a part of authentic history. The whole thing is a gigantic fraud upon human credulity. The sublime creation and career of Christendom was due to the Father of Lies !

"John did no miracle, but all things that John spake of this man were true" (John x. 41).

There was the greatest possible incentive to attribute to John Baptist, miracles, on the part of his faithful disciples, if they could truly affirm them. But Truth forbid it. No one of John Baptist's disciples did venture to declare that his Master was equally divine with Jesus. And it is this St. John who was made a witness of the miraculous descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus at His baptism. The *want* of miracles in John Baptist's case is the best support of Jesus' claim to have done them.

The crowning miracle of our Blessed Lord is, of course, His Resurrection, according to His own predictions. But all that is now relegated to the realm of mendacious fiction. And yet the same writers who record the sermon on the Mount and the parables are credited with having transmitted faithfully all the Divine morality, separable from the "signs and wonders," and the Church agrees that the "sayings" have the sanction of Divine Authority. It is only when the Evangelists testify that they ate and drank with their Lord, and walked and talked with Him after He had risen from the dead, that certain Anglican Canons now tell the Church that they denied Truth and consequently denied Christ. Of what trustworthiness are the ethical contents of the Gospels, and of what authority, when the writers of them are to be critically pronounced either fools or false-swearers? But from this School of foolhardy criticism a recent utterance betrays disquietude, Dumb stones have risen from their graves to rebuke the madness of the Professors. *Floreat Archæologia Sacra !*

Consider the Will of God as compared with man's. The one finite, the other infinite. What is to be expected from the exercise of God's freedom? If a man is *free*, is God bound and limited? Ask yourselves as rational creatures. Is He less capable of working His Will than His creatures? In respect of both matter, and mind, and spirit, does He not sway the mind and enlighten the spirit, and impart to it spiritual power and grace, and cannot the same God act upon matter, without contradicting Himself?

The Will of God to save man cannot be withstood. That good Will cannot be frustrated. What human examples have we in history, making history by the strength of it! But the human will opposing the Divine makes tragedy, created human wills arrayed against God is God's sport. The Divine determinations will operate, without nullifying human responsibility in the least. Only enough freedom being left to bring in man guilty and to convince him that grace must reign.

Lastly—*Man* is not the final product of created life upon this planet. It is quite irrational to conclude that no further *ascent* is yet to be made by the *genus Homo* up to a new species. The common attack upon miracles is founded upon the testimony of five senses, but Christians possess a *sixth sense*—a supernatural gift, which absolutely prevents them from disbelieving in the Christian Revelation and the ministry of the Spirit. The sixth sense that certain men possess is a spiritual, invisible eye, seated in their souls and by that eye they see truth and know God. It is perfectly useless to argue with the men who have only five senses. All true Christians have *six*.

Glimpses of the further ascent of man were given in Apostolic days, just as rudimentary organs among the inferior creation give prophecies of the perfection they were to attain in humanity. The critics talk about our "present knowledge," they ought to use the phrase "our present *ignorance*." The Apostolic days had a much higher science. Let them look back and not forward. But that man as man is at present at the top of the scale and may not hope to make an interval not less than now separates man from the monkey is most unreasonable. Why should he not hope to become possessed of Angelic powers—under the Gospel Hope of the Resurrection? A *superman* upon the old home of probation, but then purified and regenerated. Not a new man after the Nitchse pattern, but a Heavenly one. The superman will not alone have six senses, but a seventh, an eighth, and a ninth during his further evolution, and all of them enjoyed in vastly greater perfection than ever were displayed in our present mortal existence. Where, then, would be the validity of the testimony of men possessing only five senses to contradict the possibility of the miracles, recorded by the Evangelists and Apostles, as parts of the revealed testimony to Jesus and His Resurrection?

APPENDIX (B).

TOWARDS A NEW PHILOSOPHY.

It is strange that the Church should have thought at all of philosophy, after the sole true, sufficient and satisfying philosophy had been given to the world in the Christian Revelation. Yet St. Thomas Aquinas spent his life in reconciling Aristotle with Christ and sanctified that barrenest of all intellectual exercises, the philosophy of the schoolmen.

It was, however, inevitable after the splendid achievements of the Greeks that metaphysical speculation should continue to survive, notwithstanding that the riddle of the Universe had been answered in the only way in which it can be answered.

For the human mind having been pushed to great exploits, without the help and guidance of the Christian Revelation, the memory and tendency of it could not be eradicated. For mind in the human race is one—flows over to subsequent generations and to all lands; and from the general stock, new philosophers are bound to appear and re-appear, with such modifications as the new knowledge and the new experiences of mankind suggest.

Not, however, without the aid of the Christian Revelation can anything of real value be evolved. It must be granted, once for all, that the creation of the Universe had a moral end. That the exhibition of power and wisdom was not its chief end, nor benevolence, apart from the sanction and promotion of moral ends. It is blind groping after unattainable truth without the philosophy of the Christian Revelation.

That there is a living and active personality at the back of phenomena must be recognised as axiomatic; and any apparent contradictions to it must be left for resolution from a more perfect understanding of both the Revelations—the Christian and the Natural, with the addition of the human consciousness, conformable to both, which bears its independent moral witness.

What is wanting is a better understanding of the *method* of God's manner of revealing His character to His human children. They are only children, and require to be taught the Truth by an exhibition of its *opposite*. That is as old as Pedagogues. To know holiness, sin must rule. To know health, it is required to know sickness. The blessedness of obedience is best taught by the bitterness of its opposite, as well as by its legitimate and formal punishment. Thus did God frame the world and made its laws to harmonise with the consequences of moral obedience and disobedience. Creation had no other purpose but to show the glory of God in the advancing glory of man, and all other and higher intelligences. Now power and wisdom in the author of creation, need no ratiocination to affirm them in the highest degree under the present scheme, but the attributes of holiness and benevolence are grievously wanting in convincing evidences. So much so that although the light given to every man, being darkened, led the Pagan nations to refer to the examples in Nature as authorising their vices. Much may be tendered on behalf in mitigation of their error. Why is the voice of Nature so discordant with *a priori* expectations, and in conflict with the moral witness in consciousness, and especially so in contrast with the character of God as disclosed in the Christian Revelation?

I venture to suggest that the key to the problem is to be discovered by recognising that God's method of revealing Himself was by giving impressive examples of the *contrary* qualities and conduct which he requires from His human children, and that His own character is paradoxically completely *veiled* in creation, and He is found congruously and certainly only, *outside* of nature and within only the Christian Revelation and man's own soul.

It is surely needless to offer evidences of this. If we were confined to what Nature gave us to copy, we should worship the Devil and become devils. It is in denying almost every natural voice that we become Saints.

Let us, then, begin with becoming joy and thankfulness to learn how to interpret the not inscrutable scheme of the Universe. The law of its interpretation is to understand every positive by its negative, and every negative by its positive in God.

Take the Fatherhood of God, which is the priceless Revelation of Jesus Christ. Natural science reveals that the progenitors of the race were thrown upon the world without the smallest consideration for their protection and exposed to inevitable suffering and untimely ends for no other reason that they were not brutal enough. "Kill or be killed" was the password among the trembling garrison that occupied the outposts of the great Army that was to follow. They were driven to the monkeys on the tree-tops or built among the meres higher than the reeds. And from their escalades they beheld their sustenance covered, or seeking mountain caves, beasts were before them, while if haply first to arrive, the carnivorous monsters subsequently and easily disposed of their pretensions to afford them food and shelter.

That was God's Fatherhood in the introduction of the race upon the earth and the means by which its physique slowly improved and its mind was quickened.

By contrast, let us step into one of our splendid elementary schools—the infant department. A real municipal father is there. For the poor, free meals are provided with inspected milk, kindergarten delights, toys, musical drill and infant gymnastic exercises, giving to every child of the working classes, together with free education, a period of such happiness for the child and such advantage for the

charing mother, that nothing in the world can compare with it in beneficence, if only the teaching of the Christian revelation, which inspired the whole, be not banished.

What can we make of the sort of education provided for the children of men by the author of creation? They were driven to become experts in mutual destruction, and what was at first necessary became a master passion. War, universal war, exemplified in every species of animal, and by a banquet of blood and lust the balance of animated nature must be preserved.

That being so, the author of creation being also the Author of the Christian Revelation, the irreconcilable has to be reconciled. God has undertaken to manifest what God is, by what He is *not*. There is no ambiguity when once the method is understood.

And the lessons are not confined to the inhabitants of this planet. Even the angels have much to learn, from us: but still more from *reversing* the apparent teaching of the natural order.

The Lacedæmonians, made their helots drunk in order to warn their children against insobriety. This world, in common with all the habitable worlds in space, furnishes innumerable impressive examples of contrasts and contradictions to the real character and designs of the Supreme. Leading the Hosts of Heaven, He might invite them to study moral beauty in its opposite, and behold in the universal banquet of blood and lust the assured fulfilment of those prophecies in the Old and New Testaments, which foretell the entire overthrow of the present order, and the introduction of a new Heaven and a new Earth, in which the old shall have no place and shall no longer come into mind.

The present constitution of the Cosmos is *provisional*, not eternal. All is in a state of flux, change and progress towards a greater perfection. It is not fixed, unchangeable and final. The infinite whole palpitates in every portion of it with kinetic energy, with attractions and repulsions, but obeying a never ceasing law of greater glory towards an ever receding finality. There is only one thing fixed, unchangeable and unalterable, because it is perfect, and that is the holy and goodwill of the Author of the Cosmos. The ceaseless energies of the interpenetrable and mutually assisting spheres of matter and spirit are driven by that: not by a non-moral first cause, not an impersonal force, but by St. Paul of Tarsus' own dear Redeemer.

It is for want of recognising this everlasting progress, spirally, that theologians and moralists have erred, seeking to find Divine authoritatives in Nature and Revelation, when the Divine Author of Nature only subtends it because it is *provisional*, and as to Revelation has developed it from patriarchal to Hebrew, and from Hebrew to the Christian dispensation—each a contrast to the former. What contrast can be greater than the Levitical Economy and the glorious freedom of the Gospel. To enjoy the latter and to understand its implications, none could fully know, but one who had sat at the feet of Gamaliel. But yet the Jewish fribble foreshadowed the better things, to come, though only whose spiritual perceptions were kept alive by desire perceived that it *must* be preparatory *merely*.

For want of recognising that God teaches by contrasts in Nature, and in Revelations by slowly broadening light, making earlier developments dark by comparison—for want of that, reverent students of Scripture have found sanction for modern practice in the action of servants of God during the Kingdoms of Judah and Israel, and would build up creeds from isolated texts, applicable and appropriate only to people under circumstances and in times that are long past for ever—so we find the gold of the eternal Gospel present in quantities

of unrefined ore in the old dispensation, and need to essay it by the test of the modern reign of the Holy Spirit in the spiritual consciousness, and not by the earlier Revelation of ancient date.

And as for unregenerate Nature, which so far, has remained unchanged, we require to interpret it in terms of God's opposite. *Science* is the new God of modern civilisation. This is the new Saviour which is alone worth trusting to. And yet the worshippers of this god never knew a moment of careless happiness and are weighted with apprehensions lest their scientific defences may be imperfect. If they knew nothing except that they knew themselves to be the children of God they would slip their chains of fear in a moment. But that means the Christian, not the natural Revelation. The world is now wiser, and agrees to pooh! pooh! the Revelation of Jesus Christ. We have harnessed the elements and can do anything almost, except to rejoice in hope of Eternal Life. The great aim now in our educational systems is to torture Nature and compel her to yield up her secrets, and quite naturally the world is told that it has found no God, only processes and powers. Hence we give, without debate, science teaching, and to children Nature study, whereby by help of microscopes biology will testify that the author of Nature was possessed of an unclean mind and no conscience at all. Let the children be left in ignorance of everything beneath the surface. Let them see the little gold in the mass of ugly rock—the parental solicitude and the sacrifices made for the young in the animal world—but when that short piece of gold thread has been displayed, and to pursue it is to be drawn into caves where God's opposite like owls sit inscrutable and hateful, let the lesson be closed, and organic Nature be investigated no further, except for *contrasts* with the Holy and Loving Creator. Inorganic Nature may be explored to any extent, although even that is not incapable of rewarding its worshippers by treachery and assassination.

We need, then, a new Philosophy, recognising that the Cosmos is by inherent constitution tending to change, and that in making deductions from its present order, as though it were final, conclusions as to its Eternal and Unchangeable Author must be erroneous.

The complete irreconcilability of the Revelations of the material Universe with the moral witness borne by the Christian Revelation, and with the spiritual conscientiousness of the human soul, await a key to the understanding of God in phenomena and God in history.

We have suggested that God teaches by contrasts. That there is a soul of Good in all Evil, and that it bears within it the potency and prophecy of future Good.

Under these suggestions much obscuration of the Divine glory of the Providential Ruler of human lives is taken away. Calamitous events become charged with compensations and the victims of them are seen so placed as to be given assurances of resolution to an opposite fate.

If the greater portion of the human family are doomed to simply bear with what fortitude they can summon, inescapable evils, want of food, and denied the knowledge of truth—all that is *provisional*. It is the preparatory experience which will render its destined contrast more cherished and more lasting. But the grounds of such a Philosophy would have no basis apart from faith in the Christian Revelation. It is there and there alone that every Night is seen to bear the Morning in its arms.*

A.D.

A.D.
Ante

CONTEMPORANEOUS EVENTS.

31 PAUL, aged 21 With friends in *Arabia* during our Lord's ministry.

[illegible]

35 " " " " "
35 " " " " "
35 " " " " "
35 " " " " "
35 " " " " "

Conversion on the way to Damascus.

35-38 " 28 PAUL goes to his old friends in Arabia and there meditates his *Epistle* to the Hebrews, and—

39 " after three years returns to Jerusalem
 " from Damascus.

” ” Stays with PETER fifteen days privately,
 ” ” goes thence to *Syria* and *Cilicia*, doubtless
 ” ” to *Antioch* and thence to *Tarsus*.

" " 40-43

" " 33 During these years St. PAUL preaches in Syria and Cilicia, making Tarsus his headquarters, and probably undergoes most of the sufferings mentioned in 2 Cor. xi. 24-26 viz., 2 Roman and 5 Jewish scourgings and 3 shipwrecks, may also have literally " fought with beasts at Ephesus," see " Episode," p. 390.

" " ST. PAUL IS BROUGHT FROM TARSUS TO ANTIOCH BY BARNABAS (ACTS XI, 26) AND STAYS A YEAR BEFORE THE FAMINE. THE DISCIPLES FIRST CALLED CHRISTIANS.

Crucifixion and Ascension, Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

PONTIUS PILATE is deprived of his office and banished, CAIPHAS H.P. deposed.

Flight of some Disciples from Jerusalem to Antioch. PHILO at Alexandria.

The Tetrarch HEROD ANTIPAS, ruler over the greater part of *Judæa*. JAMES, BROTHER OF CHRIST, head of the *Jerusalem Church* (35).

JOSEPHUS, born at *Jerusalem* (36). TIBERIUS
dies 16th March (37). PILATE massacres
Samaritans at *Gerizim* (35 or 36). CALIGULA,

Emperor (37). Admission of CORNELIUS into the Church (39 or 40).

New persecution in *Jerusalem*. JAMES, son of ZEBEDEE, killed. PETER imprisoned. AGRIPPA I. dies at *Cæsarea*, after the Passover. *Judaea* again made a Procuratorship under FADUS, HEROD, brother of AGRIPPA, grandson of HEROD THE GREAT, made KING OF CHALCIS, in *Lebanon*, with superintendence of the Temple and Temple Treasury, and nomination of High Priest. War in *Britain* (43-51).

PAULINE EVENTS.

CONTEMPORANEOUS EVENTS.

- A.D.
- 45 PAUL is set apart as an Apostle. Famine continues in *Judea*.
46 & 47 At *Antioch*. Famine in *Judea*.
- 48 PAUL, aged 38, in *Antioch* a whole year with BARNABAS. PAUL's second journey to *Jerusalem* with BARNABAS, to hand over Alms for poor brethren, PAUL, however, does not go the whole way, and does not actually visit the Holy City, but returns to *Antioch*.
Late in the year 48, or in the spring of 49.
- 49 PAUL sets out on his—
FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY with BARNABAS and MARK, from *Antioch* to *Seleucia*, to *Cyprus*, to *Antioch in Pisidia*, *Iconium*, *Lysra* and *Derbe*. The journey lasted till 51 (Ramsay), back to *Antioch*, July 51.
- 51 At *Antioch* about a year, and then pays his third visit to *Jerusalem* with BARNABAS to deliberate with the *Jerusalem Church* upon the obligations under the Law required from the *Gentile Converts*. PETER at *Antioch*.
- 52 PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY, lasting two and a half to three years. From *Antioch* to *Cilicia*, *Lyconia*, *Galatia*, *Troas*, *Philippi*, *Thessalonica*, *Berea*, *Athens* and to *Corinth*. At *Corinth* from autumn 53 to early spring 55 (Ramsay).
- 53 Writes FIRST EPISTLE TO THESSALONIANS (Wieseler).
54 Writes SECOND EPISTLE TO THESSALONIANS (Wieseler). PAUL leaves *Corinth* and reaches in summer *Jerusalem* for Pentecost and thence goes to *Antioch*.
55 PAUL's fourth visit to *Jerusalem* on his return from *Corinth*. He is at *Antioch* through the summer and thence writes the EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS (Wieseler).
- Thrace* is made a *Roman Province*.
QUEEN HELENA in *Jerusalem* (46). Census of *Rome* 5,984,072 adult citizens (?) throughout the Empire).
HEROD OF CHALCIS driven out of *Rome*. HEROD OF CHALCIS dies. BERENICE, his widow, henceforth lives with her brother, AGRIPPA. This AGRIPPA (II.) hitherto living privately at *Rome*, is made KING of CHALCIS, with all the offices lately held by his Uncle, HEROD.
CLAUDIUS marries AGRIPPINA. Adopts NERO, her son.
- Decree of CLAUDIUS, banishing the Jews from *Rome* (52). CARACTACUS sent prisoner to *Rome*.
- FELIX made procurator on the disgrace of CUMANUS (52-60).
Tetrarchy of *Trachonitis* given to AGRIPPA II.
GALLIO is Proconsul of *Achaia* from April 53 to April, 54.
NERO (born A.D. 37) Accession 13th October, 54. CLAUDIUS having been poisoned by AGRIPPINA that her son might ascend.
Revolt of the Sicarii, headed by an Egyptian (Acts xxi. 38).

PAULINE EVENTS.

CONTEMPORANEOUS EVENTS.

55 PAUL in *Corinth* from autumn, 53, to early spring, 55 (Ramsay) Late in the summer PAUL sets out upon his THIRD GREAT MISSIONARY JOURNEY and having passed through the upper Coasts came to *Ephesus*.

56 & 57 FIRST EPISTLE TO CORINTHIANS (and Weiseler thinks) SECOND EPISTLE TO CORINTHIANS same year. EPISTLE TO TITUS also. (Ramsay assigns Corinthians and Romans to same period).

58 PAUL visits *Macedonia* and *Greece*. Writes SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS from *Macedonia*; EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS from *Corinth*.

59 PAUL leaves *Corinth* on his fifth visit to *Jerusalem*, and is made prisoner for two years at *Cæsarea*, his route to *Jerusalem* was to *Philippi*, voyage to *Troas*, *Miletus*, *Coos*, *Rhodes*, *Patara*, *Phenicia*, *Tyre*, *Ptolemais*, *Cæsarea*, *Jerusalem*.

60 Autumn, sent to *Rome* by PORCIUS FESTUS, Procurator. Winter, shipwrecked at *Malta*.

61 Spring, arrives at *Rome*.

62 At *Rome*. Spring, writes EPHESIANS, COLOSSIANS and PHILEMON, and in autumn PHILIPPIANS, likewise HEBREWS, enlarged and completed from notes in *Arabia* (?).

63 He is acquitted and goes to *Macedonia*, Phil. ii. 24.

64 Goes to *Asia Minor*, Philemon 22.

64 & 65 In *Spain* (GEIKIE makes PAUL beheaded, 65).

66 Summer to *Asia Minor*, 1 Timothy i. 3.

67 Summer to *Macedonia*, writes FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

" Autumn to *Ephesus* and writes EPISTLE TO TITUS.

67 PAUL, winters at *Nicompolis*.

68 PAUL'S second imprisonment at *Rome*. Writes SECOND EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.

68 PAUL is executed, May or June (Connybeare and Howson).

70 Destruction of *Jerusalem* and *Temple* by TITUS.

SENECA addresses his two Books "*De Clementia*" to NERO, who profited not all by his teaching. Banishment of CAPITO for misgoverning *Cilicia*. P. OELER, impeached by the province of *Asia*, for the like offence, dies of old age!

Murder of AGRIPPINA, by her son's order, March 20th. An eclipse of the sun, April 30th.

Quinquennial games instituted by NERO at *Rome*. A comet visible for six months. War with BOADICEA in *Britain*.

JAMES the JUST, brother of our Lord, killed at *Jerusalem*.

Burning of *Rome*, 19-25 July. ST. PETER crucified, persecution of the Church. EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS issued in 64.

SENECA dies (65).

JUDE written. Jewish war breaks out, VESPASIAN in command, CESTIUS GALLUS badly defeated. Zealots in power at *Jerusalem*. JOSEPHUS in *Galilee*, VESPASIAN also.

Greek converts to Christianity adopt the new religion to their various philosophical systems and form numerous sects, to which the general name of Gnostic is given. NERO dies June 9.



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Date Due

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